

TRUE TO THE MISSION: REVITALIZING THE MISSION OF THE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THE AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH – 3RD DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

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by

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United Theological Seminary, 2003

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This project focuses on the development of a model for ministry that will help to enable the compliance of the Women's Missionary Society/Young People's Department regarding missionary work at Greater Allen A.M.E. Church. In relating to the Discipline of the A.M.E. Church, the project seeks to bridge the gap between local church practice and the principle set forth in the Discipline. Through a qualitative approach using pre/post assessments, questionnaires in a teaching workshop tool, a more knowledgeable and committed community emerged in this congregation.

The need for a new model was realized and a training manual will provide an ongoing education to lead to the empowerment of the Missionary Society.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For this is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24). I shall not die but live and declare the works of the Lord (Psalm 118:17).

To God be the glory for the things God has done! Saying “thank you” is just not enough. I owe a debt of gratitude to all those who prayed and supported me during this Doctoral Program.

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PREFACE

While growing up in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the writer noticed that there was always a missionary society and a young people's department. Therefore, the writer was familiar with the missionary format and program. As the writer watched how television, movies, the media, and the public view missionary work, the writer saw that it did not always have the look of what the writer was involved with, but then, as a youngster, the writer was satisfied with the department and the leadership. The missionary society of the writer's church never went into foreign countries, but had contact with the youth. We shared our gifts used in our churches with the community. Our leaders had a heart for sharing and teaching us good principles. The writer came from a family where caring and sharing was part of everyday life. Coming from this kind of environment made being a part of the young people's department fun and exciting.

As leaders changed and the writer got older, the work changed. The society began to appear as another social club and that has bothered the writer until this very day. Until the missionaries get past the white dresses, high heels, and the special outfits for certain occasions, and when the missionaries stop spending large amounts of money to sleep in hotels and eat in fancy restaurants only to give reports, the missionary society will continue to be another social club. It is time for the missionary society of the A.M.E. church to wake up and make an honest assessment of its relevance. It takes work and dedication to fight all the problems that plague our churches, communities, families, and the world. God has commissioned us to be good stewards.

The writer is looking for and requesting a change, and the writer believes that it will come one day, but not without struggle. In the writer's opinion, the Christian experience is not complete without missionary outreach. We are truly Christians only when we have the zeal to go out and share our resources and our time with others.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Lois Wheat Thornton, my grandmothers, Mable Jackson Wheat, Alberta Ellington Thornton Leslie, and Ethel Courtner Prear. I have been truly blessed by their training and love. They taught me how to care for others as a community and the true meaning of family. Their spirit will always be with me as their old sayings instilled a desire to pass their rich heritage to my children and grandchildren.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMEC	African Methodist Episcopal Church
WMS	Women's Missionary Society
SWMS	Senior Women's Missionary Society
YPD	Young People's Division

INTRODUCTION

Mission, as it is currently understood, is a construct that originated from Western Christian countries. Mission, in its traditional form, included traveling to non-Christian countries to convert the inhabitants to Christianity by preaching the gospel, celebrating the sacraments, performing works of charity, providing relief, stressing education, and developing the church as it is conceived in the Western world.¹ Most converts were baptized and received the sacraments of the church, and they considered Western culture and religion superior to any other culture or religion, including their own. Those who perpetuated this model for missions generally considered their church the only or primary source of salvation for humankind. Therefore, they desired to go where the church did not exist and to establish the church with all its western ideals in order to offer salvation to all others.² Today, being a missionary is not merely limited to belonging to a missionary society, nor is it simply crossing high cultural barriers to herald the Kingdom of God, though it might include those. It is to hear the cry of the world, even the cry which sheer hunger and exhaustion and despair stifle at its birth, it is to hear the cry as God hears it, and to respond, not with books and international conferences, but with truly biblical

¹ Anthony Bellegamba, *Mission and Ministry in the Global Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).

² Ibid., 49.

praxis, a praxis which is not Marxist or Capitalist, but one which incarnates the will of God in an as of yet unredeemed world.³

Mission is more than the multiplying of missionaries and churches; it is confrontation of the human condition in the expectation of the coming of God's kingdom.⁴ A true church is essentially missionary in origin, purpose, training, and work. Too often, mission work has been a minor consideration of the Christian Church. The principle purpose of the church has therefore been minimized, if not completely disregarded. The Christian Church should be fully committed to the examples, doctrines, and practices of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

The biblical materials out of which the church's missionary consciousness, comprehension, and compliance have commonly been drawn is neatly distilled in the words of the Great Commission, found at the end of Matthew's Gospel in 28:19-20, with variations in the other synoptic Gospels. The simple scriptural command to go and make disciples of all the nations has much to commend it as a continuing source of fuel for the Christian mission. It is linked to Jesus himself. It is a clear, concise set of orders. The living God of the Bible is revealed to humans as essentially a God who sends others out to share a message. It is God's nature to send. However, before God sends, God must choose a person or vessel to send. God calls willing workers and commissions them. God decides upon and dispatches.⁵ The conversation that was held by Jesus with the disciples and others continues to bear directly on the central task of the church today. It pertains to

³ Peter Cotrell, *Mission and Meaninglessness* (London: SPCK, 1990).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Theodore Eastman, *Chosen and Sent* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971).

the basis of the Christian mission, the context and the manner of that mission and the power required to fulfill it.

God's practice in the Old Testament of calling others to go out and deliver a message and to do special work is equally evident in the New Testament. God called to Moses out of the burning bush, and sent him to lead his captive people out of Egypt.⁶ The angel of the Lord called Gideon away from the threshing in his wine press and sent him to defeat the Midianites.⁷ Through a vision, God called Ezekiel to his feet by the River Chebar⁸ and sent him to speak to Israelites. God called Isaiah in the temple and asked him whom God should send to be a prophet for the people. God's question prompted Isaiah to respond with "Here I am. Send Me."⁹

When God instituted the church to carry on God's work, God did not change God's attitude toward women. God has always expected each individual, male and female, to use all of his or her God-given talents, interests, and abilities in service. In the Old Testament, Miriam, Moses' sister, was called as a prophetess and was cited as one of the people who would lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.¹⁰ Likewise, Deborah, a wife, was called to be a prophetess and judge for the Israelites. She led the defeat of Jabin's army with detail and direction.¹¹

⁶ Ex. 3:4-10 and Jud. 6:11-12

⁷ Jud. 6:11-12

⁸ Eze. 2:1

⁹ Isa. 6:8

¹⁰ Ex. 15:20 and Mic. 6:4

¹¹ Jud. 4:6

The New Testament records several occasions where God called and sent others to spread a message. Through Jesus, God called Simon and Andrew and sent them to be fishers of humans.¹² On the desert road, God called Saul, persecutor of the Christians.¹³ When Jesus left his earthly ministry to return to his heavenly home, he did not intend for his message of mission to be forgotten or finished. He commissioned his band of followers to continue the work by going out into the entire world, telling the good news and making disciples of all those who would believe. No longer was God's message to be restricted to the Jews; it was to be extended to all people. This is well evidenced in the organization, the structure, and function of the early church. The Acts of the Apostles records the beginning of the church, or the organization of Jesus' followers, called those of the way, the brethren, the saints, the Christians, and so on. They were to be concerned with the spread of the Christian message and the work of particular preachers, evangelists, and leaders. The epistles or letters shed even more light on the life of the early Christian church, including the joys and the problems within the Church and the persecution from without. These writings give specific instructions for solving problems, encouraging Christians to remain faithful in the face of persecution and false teaching, exhorting them to live in Christ's way no matter what happens in the world around them.¹⁴

The prophetess continued in the New Testament as evidenced by the reference to Anna, a prophetess and a widow, who served night and day with fasting and prayer.¹⁵ She was totally committed to God and realized that redemption was coming to Israel through

¹² Mk: 1-6

¹³ Acts 9:3-6

¹⁴ Julia Staton, *What the Bible Says About Women* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1980).

¹⁵ Lk. 2:36-39

Israel through the infant Jesus. Another example is the woman at the well, who had a bad reputation. Yet, after meeting and talking with Jesus, her life was changed completely. She became a personal evangelist. Dorcas is another example of one who met the needs of people and shared the compassion of Christ. She is perhaps the strongest biblical example of a missionary, for she is recorded for the charity and special acts of service she performed.

From previous examples, one can conclude that Jesus intended for his attitude and behavior toward women to be the example and standard for those of the early Church. Women were to be treated with love, respect and compassion, as they continued to study and work in the ministry of the church. Jesus further intended for the Christians to continue his efforts to elevate the status of women, to think of them as important individuals, and to allow women to contribute in many ways to his cause, namely to evangelize the world.

Chapter One integrates the Spiritual Autobiography and researcher's personal ministry in the church.

Chapter Two presents published literature that relates to strengths, struggle, and survival. This literature parallels with personal stories and experience.

Chapter Three is a narrative description of the theoretical, biblical, theological and historical focus of the project that serves as the foundation for this ministry.

Chapter Four presents the design of the model and how it was implemented. A discussion of research methodology and the initial plans for implementation are discussed.

Chapter Five presents a reflection of what actually happened in the process of implementation through the utilization of the training model. It also presents the total field experience.

Chapter Six contains the reflections summary and conclusions that the writer shares of what the writer learned and what should be done differently in the re-implementation of the model.

The Appendices include invitation letters, questionnaires, pre/post assessments, session forms, transcript of type session, Missionary Society survey, and pictures of context.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

There is a familiar phrase, “No cross, no crown.” In 1978, one of the crosses in the life of the writer was when she suffered a criminal assault on the street. The medical profession said that the writer should have died or been permanently damaged because of severe extensive damage to the writer’s body; however, the writer had a praying mother and many others that let the doctors know that they didn’t have the last word. Everything they said the writer wouldn’t ever do, the writer did. It took the writer over a year to see the results but she served a God who can do anything but fail. The writer promised God that, if he would deliver her from that sick bed, that she would serve him until she died. That incident changed the writer’s life and her family’s life unto this day. The writer admits there are still issues that must be dealt with and this project has helped tremendously.

The writer was the middle child of Lenistien (Buddy) and Lois Thornton and was born in Dayton, Ohio. Her father came from Fort David, Alabama where, at the age of nine, he moved to Dayton after he had buried his Father and infant brother. Her father became the man of the family, according to his other brothers and sister who were very young. Before the writer was born, her parents lived in southwest Dayton on both Eddie and S. Edison Streets. The Edison residence was a brown double that still stands on the corner of Edison and Paisley Street. This area of Dayton was called “Hunk Town”

because a mixture of Hungarians and blacks lived together in this community. Across the street lived her paternal great grandparents. Since this house was on the corner of S. Edison and Paisley Street and was very large, everyone was always there. The house was called “the big house.” Her mother’s family was together and their doors were open to others. The writer recalls that the big house not only cared for those living but, when there was a death in the family, they brought the deceased home to what were called “wakes.”

Her paternal grandmother, who was called “Big Mama,” was not a big woman in stature, but to the grandchildren she was big in their lives. As the family reflected about her, she didn’t stop taking care of the house, cleaning, and cooking. Big Mama made big teacakes, which were a cookie that wasn’t sweet, but the taste was heavenly. During the writer’s growing years, time with Big Mama was an every weekend affair. Here was a woman with a disability that did not keep her from running a home, boarding house, and taking care of many people in the community. This is the writer’s heritage. Even disabled, Big Mama took personal care of the writer’s “bowed” legs. Her washing and rubbing them helped correct most of the bowedness that the writer had developed. When Big Mama couldn’t take care of herself, the writer’s mother, dad, sister and brother cared for her. Because of her attachment to her community and the home, when she had to relocate, it was as if someone had knocked the life out of her. When she had to be moved into another home, she grieved herself to death. She didn’t go to church, but had a strong faith in God and felt that God would always take care of her. When she died in the last home, the family was there.

The writer’s maternal grandmother, who answered to “Mama Wheat,” was the lady the writer ran behind in church as a preteen and teenager. In the early years, her grandmothers lived within a block of each other. What child could be so blessed as to have

not one, but two grandmothers? For several years, they enjoyed the excitement of running up and down the street to their safe havens where something good to eat was always available. Mama Wheat was the grandmother who went to church, belonged to the Stewardess Board, choir, and Senior Board. The writer's parents went to church and her mother was an usher and still participates at the age of a young 82. The writer believes her Big Mama knew the Lord and loved him, but the time she spent with Mama Wheat showed her what the fellowship with other believers was like. The writer saw the better of two worlds, working within the church and working outside of the church. They taught her to love God and her neighbor.

When Mama Wheat died in 1955, the writer was still in high school and felt the world had fallen apart. Mama Wheat was her grandmother, but more importantly, she was the writer's best friend. Mama Wheat always knew when something was wrong and knew how to handle it. At seventeen, experiencing death wasn't new for the writer, as we had many deaths that she witnessed. Her aunt, uncles, cousins, and church family made death no stranger to her family. But losing Mama Wheat caused the writer to have a mental setback. She visited the cemetery every week, slipping off without telling anyone where she was going. The writer questioned God because Mama Wheat was her support and the strength in the family. Her absence is still felt to the present day. Mama Wheat was instrumental in allowing the Lord in us to serve others. The writer wanted to be like her grandmother and mother, always working for the Lord and helping people. This journey began at the age of 6 and continues to this day.

Prior to this, the writer's school days began when she moved to Danner Avenue, Dayton, Ohio. She attended Melissa Bess Daycare Center, Early Childhood Education Program and Kindergarten. Her sister works there and manages the bookkeeping. Some of

the people that were with the author at Melissa Bess Daycare Center are part of her life today in some way or another. The author attended Willard Elementary, which was a predominately black public school, and the experience there made a great impact on her life that will never be forgotten. The author's teachers from the first to the sixth grade taught her pride and respect for herself and others.

The author graduated from the Dayton public school system and remains very thankful for that journey. They instilled the importance of caring for family and the community where she lived. Not only was she taught the 3 R's, but was also taught to love. Today, many of those classmates are still friends and stay in touch. One special classmate is Betty Wooley-Harris who lives in California. She has followed the writer's journey since high school. Betty has been with her through the ups and downs and has been very supportive of the author's goals. They communicate by correspondence and when Betty is in town. They visit and fellowship. At the writer's Trial Sermon, Betty was present and was on the program giving remarks. This meant much to the writer with someone from Kindergarten still standing with her; that's love.

The writer's father did not have a high school degree, but her mother did. They felt that education was very important and they expected the writer to achieve in education. Their children were expected to be educated and trained to become productive citizens and have the ability to take care of themselves. Her parents worked hard and provided for them the best they could and the family was never without. They were a close-knit family. That closeness extended to the writer's maternal and paternal parents and to her church family. There were some in the church that the writer thought were family but were only friends of the family! Her father was a foundry worker. He had a quiet spirit and a strong character. He was a leader who taught them to walk upright among all they came in

contact with. They reminded the writer that this type of character would carry her a long way in life. The writer's mother, like her mother, was always helping us and never neglected her duties as a wife and mother. Both parents provided her with strong religious and moral beliefs that have contributed to her spiritual growth. The family read the bible at home and ate together, always saying grace before each meal. So many things have been lost today that were not done in some homes like theirs.

After the writer graduated from high school, she wanted to enlist in the Armed Forces, but her father wouldn't hear of it. The writer was left wondering what was next for her. There were two things she wanted to do: teaching and nursing. It was decision time and limited money. The writer was a person who never wanted to ask for anything or put unnecessary strain on her parents, so her choice was to register for Dayton School of Practical Nursing. Upon acceptance, she completed a two-year program. The writer had a small son, was unwed, and yet her parents were very supportive. After graduating from nursing school, she was hired at the Dayton Veterans Administration Medical Center in 1960 and remained there for five years. In 1965, the writer enrolled at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio. She commuted daily and worked part-time at Josephine's Nursing Home. Taking care of her family and working were a joy, but working in the church or wherever needed was more fulfilling. The writer was able to help others and give back for all that had been done for her. There were so many people who provided encouragement to stay focused. The writer thanked God for sending all those angels her way during that time. Her life was taking off, even though there were trials. The triumphs outweighed the trials.

The author married in 1978 and had two sons. Jimmy, the oldest at this time, was away at school when Walter was six years old. The youngest, Walter, was with her when

the assault took place and he still carries those scars. This incident traumatized Walter and has caused him much pain. The author and her husband divorced after the assault incident. There were things that she could not do as a result of her injuries and it was hard for her husband to comprehend that. They went to counseling, but it was hard to let loved ones know about a pain that only you experienced and the memory of recall was very slow.

This was a difficult time for the writer as her heart was aching to let her loved ones know how confused she really was. As time passes by the memories have returned little by little, but it has taken years; and the writer thanks God for those years.

When the writer looks at what Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in 2003 has done for her these last three years, she knows without a doubt where God is leading her and for what purpose. Four years afterwards, her daddy died. This was more fuel heaped on the family who had not come out of the crisis that began in 1978 with her injury. With God as their strength in times of trouble, the writer and her family have been able to go on living. Her daddy's death left a big gap in their lives and in their extended family. She embarked upon the challenge of her life. The writer had experienced rehabilitation, lost her father, and she knew whom she had to depend upon. She was a divorcee with two sons, no time for self-pity. The question was what was she going to do? The writer had to show her sons that the talk about this God she served wasn't just talk, so she must practice what she had been preaching. Bro Hughley, who has gone to be with the Lord, would say at their weekly prayer meetings, "Sis, Beverly, you can do it." He would say, "Keep lifting up Jesus." This is what the writer has tried to do. Scripture says, "I shall not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord had done."

The writer returned to school after consulting with her doctor and graduated from the University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio with a Masters of Education Degree in 1988.

Keeping busy became her therapy and it worked. After the experience of being a Sunday school teacher, she became the superintendent. The writer wanted to expand her knowledge of religion to benefit the church and herself. She enrolled in Payne Theological Lay School and graduated in 1995 with a two-year certificate. She was uncertain where God was leading her, but obedient to her call to serve. The writer enrolled in the Graduate Program at Payne Theological Seminary and graduated in May 2000 with a Master's of Divinity. For her supervised ministry, required at the Seminary, she felt the Lord took her back to where she had begun over thirty years ago to show her what she was to do. It was there that the writer saw people receiving help in the nursing home and hospitals. She came in contact with the mental illness department, drug addiction, and homeless families—everybody needing to feel like someone cared. When this was completed, she returned to the VA to spend time with the residents, as she knew what God wanted her to do: go serve, let my people know they are loved. The writer's experience in CPE after graduating from Payne Theological Seminary, led her to where she is today. Being a Chaplain was her desire, which includes ordination. She is halfway there, one more hoop to jump. The next ordination was with the Elders orders in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the writer received this in the fall of 2001.

The writer has worked with and completed four units in Clinical Pastoral Education training and what has been revealed and disclosed to her is hard to believe. The writer says you look at yourself and say, "Will the real Beverly Daniels stand up?" Pastoral counseling class at Payne Theological Seminary has opened the door; she is excited about this trip she is on. This journey is another phase of preparation for God's work. This world is full of hurting people and her ministry and her God tells her to GO ON.

As a young adult, the writer's careers were nursing and teaching. She was going to enlist in the Armed Service to support her education. That possibility changed, but going to school to be a nurse and teacher did not. After graduating from Dayton School of Practical Nursing in 1960, the writer worked five years at The Veterans Administration Medical Center in the part called Brown's Hospital at that time. After five years, she continued her education and commuted to Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio and graduated with a B.S. in Education in 1971. She started to work for the Dayton Public School District full-time in September 1971 and is still working in the field of Special Education, teaching children with a developmental handicap. Working with the youth and the elderly is what Beverly is about. In the school system, her co-workers call her the miracle worker when handling students. She tells them it is God's gift to her. Many times she find herself involved with students outside the classroom. Their families call upon her in many situations in their family lives. They ask her for help when they need food or clothes, when there's a death, or when someone is in trouble. They trust her enough and know she cares, and they call on her. From the hospital to the classroom, the writer can be found sharing and working with others in the community. She worked with a prison ministry, The Hands of Faith, and wherever she went she carried her faith with her. The joy that she had working there was brought back to her remembrance. They worked hard at the VA, but they worked together and the writer always had a love for the place and people, and the Lord sent her back to it. She went to many different areas at the center, but the nursing home was where the majority of her time was spent. Talking and listening to the resident of the facility stirred up warm feelings. Sharing the word and giving them encouragement in the midst of their pain inspired her. Being a Chaplain was what she

wanted to do. After being a missionary most of her life, she now was seeking another vocation of service for the Lord.

The writer's church did not have any problems with her being a missionary, but a Chaplain was another issue. The writer knew it would be a challenge because she would need the endorsement of her church. Therefore, it would be necessary to get on the track of being an ordained minister in the A.M.E. church. This is what she did. Being involved at the VA with the Chaplain's department let her know there was something for her to do; whatever doubts that might have crept in when others questioned what she was doing, the Pastoral Care class, the Death and Grief classes were coals that stirred up her fire. When she took the CPE Units, there was no doubt about what she was doing. Her church does not have much for senior women to do in the ministry, but thanks be to God she has found her place and being a missionary started the travels.

CHAPTER TWO

STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL

Because the writer felt that the Holy Bible, along with the Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was the literature that the Missionary Society at Greater Allen A.M.E. Church would use for her project to create an environment that would encourage and promote teaching and learning. This chapter reviews the literature and research of scholars and authors who have laid the foundation for this work.

“The Cold Within”

Author unknown

Six humans trapped by happenstance
In a dark and bitter cold;
Each one possessed a stick of wood,
Or so the story’s told

Their dying fire in need of logs,
The first woman held hers back.
For on the faces around the fire,
She noticed one was black.

The next man looking cross the way
Saw one not of his church,
And couldn’t bring himself to give
The fire his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes;
He gave his coat a hitch.
Why should his log be put to use
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought
Of the wealth he had in store,
And how to keep what he had earned
From the lazy, shiftless poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge
As the fire passed from sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood
Was a chance to spite the white.

The last man of this forlorn group
Did naught except for gain,
Giving only to those who gave
Was how he played the game.

The logs held tight in death's still hands
Was proof of human sin.
They didn't die from the cold without,
They died from – THE COLD WITHIN.

The church of Jesus Christ, especially its missionary arm, has normally understood the transformation of society to be an essential part of its task. While the focal point of missions has been to communicate the Good News of Christ to all men and women, to bring them to repentance and faith, and to baptize them into the church, it has also involved a process of teaching them to “observe all things” that Jesus commanded.¹

From the beginning, the United States established a new kind of human society that was built on the backs of slaves who were brought to the Americas in chains. Slavery was not the program designed for a global future. The slaves were brought to the country and were stripped of their culture, religion, and identity. They were the only group to be denied their humanity. America was to be something utterly new and different, something

¹ Edgar J. Elliston, *Christian Relief and Development* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing 1989), 7.

never before seen in the world.² It seemed as though America had a special place in history.

Those people who came freely to this country came for many reasons. Religious freedom was one reason. Settlers from Europe and other countries truly thought that they were arriving at a place where their dreams of a Christian civilization could be fulfilled.³ But this civilization that was supposedly built on God and humanity did not include all groups, especially the black community that was there in the beginning. Therefore, America is not a Christian civilization because it does not truly uphold the good of all humanity.

The structure that was established in the beginning was faulty and not always fair to everyone. Today as never before, the churches of North America are active in sensitizing the consciences of religious people and the public at large to the great tasks of social reconstruction. The world has become a small village. Today, all people are living together. They are interdependent and must learn how to live together peacefully in daily life. They must seek to deal with one another's culture, customs, traditions, and ways of life or they may die together. Human beings must live and learn to work together and to appreciate one another or they may bring this society to a tragic end.⁴ In global living, all groups are to bring with them their religion and culture. They are not to lose or give up their birthrights, but to share one with another. A global community is like vegetable soup. Everyone brings something to add to the combination. In the past, the slaves were not considered contributors to history. They were seen as only providing the muscles and

² James Scherer, *Global Living Here and Now* (New York: Friendship Press, 1974), 63.

³ Ibid., 64.

⁴ Bellagamba, *Mission and Ministry in the Global Church*, 6.

strength needed to build the land. Despite the powers to be that ruled and controlled the slaves, the slaves were able to preserve some of their culture and religion, even though some slaves accepted the message the missionaries brought to them and they tried to incorporate it into their lives. Their survival skills sustained them through what can be considered as exile from their native land.

The special place in history that America had is still being written about and discussed in many communities. The efforts toward a new kind of human society resulted in a nation that was built on slavery and slavery has left a mark on this country. America and its people do not want to deal with the effects slavery has caused. The Africans were brought here as slaves and the Home Missionaries wanted to bring the message of Christianity to the slaves in hopes of converting them. Some missionaries brought the bible and taught that the Lord loved the slaves. Other times, Christianity was taught with the intention of keeping the slaves docile and in subjection to their masters. The missionaries came into conflict with many of the powers that be for their effort in evangelizing the slaves. Slave masters felt that the slaves might become ungovernable and rebellious.

The development of the A.M.E. Church draws together both the experiences of freedom and slavery, which are demonstrated by the life of the founder of the denomination, Richard Allen, who was once a slave. The A.M.E. Church, like most other Christian churches, believed strongly in evangelization. It was keenly aware of the strong tradition of evangelization followed by all of the churches in the Methodist family who subscribed to John Wesley's doctrine, which included evangelism.

Jesus said, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends or your relatives, nor your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you'll be repaid. But when you give a feast invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be

blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.” (Luke 14:12-14).

As missionaries, we are supposed to be called and committed, but it appears that we use the phrase when it is convenient for us. Over the years, we have seen the change in the level of commitment in our churches and our communities. We believers are going to have to give an account for what we did or did not do. Realizing that we cannot change the world with one great effort, we must begin somewhere and that is in our homes, our schools, our churches, and our communities. “Give us this day,” and that’s what we work with—the day given us—and we operate one day at a time.

We are losing our children. Drugs, teen pregnancy, and poverty have not stopped. AIDS is running rampant in our youth. As missionaries in the church, what are we doing? It is our job to make a difference. According to statistics from the National Center for Children in Poverty, approximately twenty-one percent of people living in poverty in the United States are children under six years old. About forty percent of the children live in our inner cities. Many of them are unwanted and will eventually populate the prisons of the country. Where is the heart that is needed to reach out to these people? If we ignite the fire of our churches and get involved in mission work, we can make a difference.

No matter what scale it is on, every church should have a Christian education program. Missionary education is the tool missing that will provide enrichment in the missionary work and guide growth in the church, like living toward the assumption of the privileges and responsibilities of membership in The Family of God on Earth.

God's Call to Mission

Mission goes out from God. Mission is God's way of loving and saving the world. God calls his creatures to a future greater than they could ever make for themselves. From the beginning of the Biblical record, the voice of God is active, provoking human beings to move, change, and recognize who they are and what, by God's help, they can become. The very name of the church, *ecclesia*, means a community that has been summoned, not one that chooses to bring itself into being. *Ecclesia* is a word whose roots are in the secular world of the Greek and Roman Empires. Within the Roman Empire, *ecclesia* meant "a group of free citizens gathered to deliberate" and those who were to seek the welfare of their neighbors. It was a political and social concept. The early Christians, with the authority of Jesus Christ as their inspiration, believed themselves to be "free citizens" of a new order, an emerging, coming kingdom. *Ecclesia* also means called out and called together; so Christians perceived themselves summoned and chosen by God. This ought to affect our worship, our evangelism and our response to the social political and economic realities.⁵

But the deeper we go into the meaning of God's call as it is recorded for us, the more we see that it tells us something of what God is. God does not simply call; God sends.⁶

When we look to scripture, we see that the Bible is full of sending and being sent. "So come," God says to Moses at the burning bush, "I will send you to Pharaoh to bring

⁵ *Anglican Communion Called to Live and Proclaim the Good News* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999), 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*

my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” (Exodus 3:10) Isaiah’s temple vision is all about sending: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’” (Isaiah 6:8). Being sent was the heart of being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure disease, and sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal. (Luke 9:1-2) That sending echoed Jesus’ own experience of being sent by God. “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (John 20:21) Sending was also central in the coming of the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised, “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26).⁷

“What is the mission of the Church?” asks the Catechism in the Episcopal Church’s *Book of Common Prayer*. It answers that question by summarizing all this sending in the following sentence, “The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.”⁸

Every Episcopalian is automatically a member of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and the parishioner’s work is their choice. Episcopalians offer mission education to all ages. Mission education will enable a community to work knowledgeably, stay alert for new possibilities, and avoid mistakes. Education is often most effective when it goes hand-in-hand with action.⁹

In Thomas Hale’s book, *On Being A Missionary*, he talks about missions for everyone. The church is missionary in nature. Missions is the task of every member, not

⁷ Titus Presler, *Horizons of Mission* (Boston, MA: Cowley Publications, 2001, 6.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

just a few. In the early church, missions gave rise to theology. Missions isn't just one subject in a seminary curriculum; it lies at the heart of all subjects. Missions is what makes theology relevant.

There can be no divorce between theology and missions. Theology should inspire mission. After all, God's word is full of missions. Jesus told us to go, "First to Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) This means that all Christians are to go and be witnesses—to their families, to their neighborhoods, to their cities. In other words, all Christians are called to be missionaries. As missionaries, we have one goal and that is to reconnect men and women to God. This is done with love—the love God has poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.¹⁰

Jesus completed the mission for which God had sent him through his self-emptying obedience, taking the form of a slave or servant, and his death on the cross. The same mission has been handed down to us, his disciples. We can have no other way except the way of the cross to complete the mission entrusted to us. The cross is our model for community and mission, which is cruciform existence.

Thomas John gave us three important characteristics of a cruciform existence and mission. *First, it is a mission of obedience.* It is a mission done by a community that lives in total obedience to God and undivided loyalty to the reign of God. The church as a community should become a missionary community that reorders its life, centered around God's will and purpose for all humankind, so that it may be a sign and sacrament of the Kingdom. *Secondly, our mission is a mission of solidarity.* It is a mission of self-emptying and identification with those who are oppressed, suffering, and marginalized. It is a

¹⁰ Thomas Hale, *On Being a Missionary* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1995).

mission of solidarity with those who are nonpersons in this society; it is a mission of loving the unloved, seeking the lost, caring for the least and uplifting the lost. *Finally, our mission is the mission of servant hood.* We have been doing mission from a position of wealth and power. The time has come for us to learn to do mission from a position of powerlessness. From the Christendom model, we should move to the model of the “suffering servant” of Yahweh. To be a Christian is to be available for others, to be the man or woman for others, to be a stepping-stone for others to a fuller life. It is to be at the service of others.¹¹

Shirley Townsend Jones is a missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries serving as a church and community worker with the Bennettsville-Cheraw Area Cooperative Ministry, Bennettsville, South Carolina. Shirley says, “My work continuously involves reaching out to the poor, the abused, the abandoned, the sick and the aged, the poorly housed and the malnourished. God’s mission is being carried out through the programs and services her ministry provides. As missionaries, what are we doing? Do we meet the requirements?

Therefore if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work . . . And faith, hope, charity, and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work. Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, charity, humility, diligence.¹²

Make your calling sure; live the gospel. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul gave this admonition: “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:14). Although missionaries are not charged with the

¹¹ Thomas John, *A Strange Accent: The Reflections of a Missionary to the United States* (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Church, USA, 1996).

¹² Florence G. Butler, *The Art of Being a Member Missionary* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1968), 2.

specific responsibility of preaching the gospel, this scripture applies directly to them because of the role they have. An often-quoted saying warns us to live our lives carefully as we may be the only bible some people read.¹³

Darren Walter's book, *The People: Magnet Church Attracting Your Community to Christ* could describe a Missionary Society, when he was comparing a group to Jonah. God gave Jonah specific instructions to go to Nineveh and he chose not to. Walter said he was resistant. We have been there too, haven't we? God says, "Go here, say this, do that . . ." and sometimes we gladly say, "yes," and sometimes we get on the boat headed in the opposite direction. Next, Walter talks about Jonah being reluctant. God took Jonah's reluctant, somewhat sad attempt to save the city and turned it into the big altar call. How many times have we been reluctant to visit someone, go to the hospital, nursing home, or prison, or spend time serving someone only to have God turn it into a blessing?

If God can reach a group of rough sailors in the midst of Jonah's resistance, if God can bring an entire city to their knees through one reluctant prophet's shouted call to repentance, what could He do through you and your church if you are truly ready to be used by Him to reach your community? If God uses the resistant and reluctant, what is in store for the ready?¹⁴ We can be reminded by the words of a hymn from the A.M.E. hymnal, "To the Work"

To the work we are servants of God.

Let us follow the path that our Master has trod:
with the balm of his counsel our strength to renew.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Darren Walter, *The People: Magnet Church Attracting Your Community to Christ* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2001), 9-10.

Let us do with our might what our hands find to do.

Toiling on, let us hope and trust. Let us watch and pray
and labor till the Master comes.

Youth Involvement

The African Methodist Episcopal Discipline clearly defines the role of the Youth Department as having a purpose of implementing a missionary program in the local church. It is the author's opinion that our youth cannot accomplish this if their adult leaders are unclear of their mission and role in the missionary society. This project through the training guide will educate the youth and adults, thereby enabling both to fulfill and live out their service as missionary servants.

One scholar identifies the role of the youth in the church as being a "cell." A cell is the basic unit of structure within a living human body. A body is composed of cells that have been formed and patterned by God. Each one of these cells is unique, yet they all function together to keep the body healthy and coordinated. It is important to realize that, as a body grows larger, cells have been reproducing and multiplying on the inside. So it is with the body of Christ. The youth are an important part of that process. They become one in unity with God, the church, and their family.

Over the past few years, there has been much debate about the nature of youth work within the church and the need for a radical look at how we effectively reach and disciple young people, an increasing number of whom have no contact with any Christian organization or church.

Youth work in many situations has been no more than glorified babysitting—a place to bring young people to keep them safe from the world. The church has often been

guilty of entertaining young people into passivity rather than equipping them for harvest and influence in our society. Young people need a challenge and a vision. They need to have a sense of belonging and destiny. They need to know they are part of church today—not just tomorrow. Church is the place where we learn, grow, take responsibility, and introduce our friends to faith in Jesus. Church is the place to be transparent and honest, helping fellow disciples to grow in our love for God and others.

Billy Kennedy in his book, *Reaching Out*, labels youth community as youth cells, which are small communities of young people led by young people where all of the above can happen. Cells are not simply the latest thing. They have been around for centuries. When Jesus began His ministry, He chose a few people to share His life. This small group provided encouragement and all values of a cell.¹⁵

With cells or whatever name you give your youth, they should not be limited by the capacity of physical buildings, central church meetings, or the skills of a few workers. Cells enable many more young people to be empowered and released to reach their friends with the good news about Jesus. 1 Corinthians 12:27 says, “You are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it.” As the church, the body of Christ, we are living organisms. The way in which we grow positively and spiritually empowers each member to function effectively.

The next chapter will establish a theoretical foundation for the project.

¹⁵ Billy Kennedy, *Reaching Out: A Fresh Resource* (Colorado Springs, CO: Nav Press, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

FOUNDATIONS

Theoretical

This Is All I Ask
by Helen Steiner Rice

Lord, show me the way
I can somehow repay
The blessings you've given to me
Lord teach me to do
What you most want me to
I'm unworthy I know
But I do love you so
I beg you to answer my plea
I've not much to give
But as long as I live
May I give completely to thee

Historical

Biblical Women In Mission

Although bible women, for the most part, are shadowy, subordinate figures, particularly in the Old Testament, there were those like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachael, Miriam, Deborah, Ruth, and others who were outstanding, each having a distinction of her own, as the author will illustrate. Through the example of Jesus in His attitude toward women, and as the result of the truth He taught, women were prominent in the early Church. Women ministered unto the Apostles of their substance and came to hold official positions of

spiritual influence. Recorded in Acts 9:36-43 is a woman named Dorcas. Dorcas is the first Greek name of a female in the New Testament; in Hebrew its variation equivalent is Tabitha. She became known in the seaport town of Joppa for her acts of charity and is the namesake for a charitable group named the Dorcas Society. Among her good works was that of fashioning clothes and garments for widows and the needy of her church and community with her hands. Under the direction of Sarah Allen, the African Methodist Episcopal Church organized its first Dorcas Society. The woman who became the first Christian Missionary (Luke 2:36-38) was named Anna. The name Anna is the same as Hannah of the Old Testament.¹ As a missionary, Anna was one of the godly remnant in Israel who, even in the darkest days before Christ came, looked for the Dayspring from on high. Thus, as she heard Simeon's praise for prophecy fulfilled, she went out to her godly friends to declare the glad tidings. These two women exemplify the true meaning of being a missionary. They gave of themselves for others and were not ashamed to proclaim the good news of Jesus the Christ. During Jesus' earthly ministry, we find women involved in caring for those in need and proclaiming what mighty works had been performed by Him.

The A.M.E. Discipline was established in order that the church fully identify with the poor and the oppressed in their struggle for human dignity. This principle is the heart and work of the church. In the Episcopal structure of our denomination, the Bishop functions in the role of the chief pastor, consequently the church's mission work was performed by the hierarchy, which was men. As time progressed, the evangelizing of mission work became acceptable for the Bishops' wives and later, the laity. It has not or does not appear to be authentic work for women even though scripture lifts up the work

¹ Herbert Lockyer, *Women of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002).

of women during Jesus' ministry and in the early church. Whether the opposition to women in missionary work was organizationally intentional or unintentional, the writer feels the pain of trying to serve the Lord in this capacity. It is painful because covertly women are not given authentic support to do this work.

The first great missionaries were all men and it was a long time before this work was open to women. With the voyages of discovery between 1500 and 1750, Catholicism became a world religion. Territories were assigned from Rome and work was directed and supported. The nuns, like lay missionaries, set out knowing nothing about the countries to which they would travel. For many, ignorance proved deadly. It also hurt those they were trying to help. Roman Catholic missionaries, like the Protestants after them, had no understanding of native culture and imposed their own ideas and beliefs on people whose own cultures and rituals they helped to destroy.

And the Ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

One of missionary movement's most noted historians, Kenneth Scott Latourette, has referred to the nineteenth century as "the Great Century" of Christian missions.² Characteristic of this period was the genocide and cultural "washing" of indigenous people and culture. The era of modern or European missions had begun with Portuguese Roman Catholic activity in India in the 1500s. It was followed during the next three centuries by further Roman Catholic and Protestant initiatives. Many of them were associated with trade or colonization in lands occupied by so-called "primitive" peoples, notwithstanding the efforts of such diverse groups such as Spanish Franciscans, French Jesuits, New

² Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The Christian World Mission in our Day* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publisher, 1958).

England Puritans, and chaplains of the Dutch East Indies Company. Secular goals and the spiritual needs of transplanted Europeans dominated. Missions to the native peoples long remained more striking for their drama than for the size of successes. Yet, as the end of the eighteenth century approached, a new missionary zeal possessed Europeans, and British Protestants in particular. Despite past setbacks, they resolved to carry the gospel not just to indigenous peoples but to all non-Christians, including those whose religious beliefs were ancient, complex, and sophisticated.³ They believed that their religion and culture was superior.

The modern mission movement takes its name from the so-called modern period of world history, which began with Enlightenment and the social, political, religious, and economic revolutions during the last third of the eighteenth century. The modern mission initiative would lead to far-reaching change in the location and composition of the Christian church. During the final years of the twentieth century more than half of the Christians were to be found outside of the region that has been the historical heartland of Christianity for nearly fifteen hundred years. New centers of Christian strength and vitality were now to be found where missionary initiatives were focused in widely scattered places in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. One must speak of missionary initiatives to indicate that from the beginning missionaries were joined in the endeavor by co-laborers indigenous to a particular culture.

Christians everywhere ought to be reflecting collectively on the meaning of what is happening in the world around them, confident that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit to discern what God is doing in their situation and to understand their calling and

³ Brower, *New Women for God*, 11.

responsibility as his or her people in the world.⁴ Missionary work is no longer geared toward erasing the culture of those it is supposed to serve. Missionary work is no longer limited to expansionists. Women are now an integral part of the missionary field. Despite the fact that women have been involved in missions for a very long time, there are still some who believe that this is a man's world and women are second-class citizens. They are those who look at the New Testament as an indication that women's power and influence ought to be private and unobtrusive. When we see how women have been stereotyped in many ways, it is not unusual to see how this was done to the women in missionary work.

Women In Mission Historically In Other Denominations

The first American women to serve as foreign missionaries in 1812 were among the best-educated women of their time. Although barred from obtaining a college education or ministerial credentials like their husbands, the early missionary wives read their Jonathan Edwards. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) a great theologian convinced the Puritan sensibility of the United States that one was wisest when most suspicious.⁵ Not only did they go abroad with particular theologies to share, but their identities as women caused them to develop gender-based mission theories. Early nineteenth century women seldom wrote theologies of mission, but they wrote letters and kept journals that reveal a rich thought world and set assumptions about women's role in the missionary task.

⁴ Roberts, *American Women in Missions*, ix.

⁵ Denise Lardner Carmody and John Tully Carmody, *The Republic of Many Mansions* (New York: Paragon House, 1990).

By the late nineteenth century, women's mission theory had developed to the point of being codified in the slogan, "Women's work for women." Popular magazines produced by various denominational women's missionary societies promoted "Women's work for women" among church constituencies.⁶ The Presbyterian Church in the 1800s was perhaps the most influential single denomination in America. The church at this time was determined to try its part in winning America to Christ. The greatest task facing the church for years to come was the evangelization of the frontier. Missionaries were sent west and southwest, and where they were sent the wives went also.

The early missionary wives, along with their husbands, shared the theological background of New England during the Second Great Awakening. However, women also participated in a uniquely feminine culture dominated by the expectation that women's primary function and concern was focused within the home. As the only public institution that encouraged the participation of women, the church became the focus of women's extra domestic activity.

In the missionary field, the wife shared the view that without God, as is found only through Jesus Christ, the souls of humanity would not obtain eternal life. Because of their biased and superior attitudes, whites believed that it was part of their duty to obey Christ by going out to "save the heathen." The conflict between familial and divine duties represented a painful and confusing competition. The Baptists were no different in their theological assertions that women were to be concerned with the home and with converting others through missionary work.

⁶ Lefferts Loetscher, *A Brief History of the Presbyterians* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1983).

The Baptists were the first American mission board to appoint a single woman as a foreign missionary. Eliza Jones, one of the many women that Robert spoke of in her book, was not able to discard her western perspective of the superiority of Christian religion and culture over other religions and cultures. She believed that Jesus went about doing good to all, but remained humble, patient, and prayerful. The Christian missionary, she believed, should imitate Jesus in all things.⁷

By the 1800s, missions had become the dominant thrust of the Baptists. This change can be attributed to a number of factors: 1) The organization of a general Baptist body, 2) The Philadelphia Association, 3) the influence of the Great Awakening, 4) the experience of expansion to the Western frontiers, and 5) the effect of the new mission undertaking initiated by William Carey in England.⁸

From the early days of the transatlantic trade to the present, Africa and America have been bound together by a complex human and imaginative traffic. James Campbell in his book *Songs of Zion* focuses on the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.), and in 1896, the A.M.E. Church opened work in South Africa, absorbing an independent Ethiopian Church founded by dissident African Christians.⁹

Unlike the African Methodist Episcopal Church, white denominations were able to sustain foreign mission fields. Their means of financial support were greater than the A.M.E. Church. A.M.E. leaders realized that their church would never be fully accepted until it too had joined the scramble for Africa. Unfortunately, the leaders of the A.M.E.

⁷ Robert, *American Women in Missions*.

⁸ John Brown, *The Century Celebration of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1892* (Holborn, EC: The Baptist Missionary Society, 1893).

⁹ James Campbell, *Songs of Zion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Church carried the same oppressive attitudes to Africa that were being exhibited to them in America. They too attempted to impose their culture and beliefs on the people of Africa.

Support for African missions reflected the influence of a new woman's organization within the A.M.E. Church. In 1874, the *Christian Recorder* issued a challenge to women of the race to take the lead in mission work. The summons was answered by a group of bishops' wives who inaugurated the Women's Mite Missionary Society (WMMS). Over the next two decades, the WMMS became the church's chief fundraiser for mission activity. The very name of the organization referred to the process by which members consolidated their small "mites" into substantial sums. Most of the organization's energies were initially devoted to the church's struggling mission in Haiti, but by the late 1880s and early 1890s Bishop Payne enlisted it in the Sierra Leone work. While mission work offered African Methodist men a field of distinction, it offered African Methodist women an opportunity to serve the church through missions.

Methodism was essentially a missionary movement, domestic and foreign. It initiated not only the spirit, but the practical plans of modern English missions. Bishop Coke so represented the enterprise in his own person for many years so as to supersede the necessity of any formal organization, but it was nonetheless real and energetic. The Wesleyan Missionary Society was formed in 1817,¹⁰ but the first Wesleyan missionaries who went out under the superintendence of Dr. Coke, entered the British colonies in 1786. When the session of the 1832 General Conference met, the society's operations had

¹⁰ Daniel A. Payne, *The Semi-Centenary and the Retrospection of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972).

extended throughout the United States. Territories of the nation had become powerful auxiliaries of the itinerant system of the church.¹¹

The African Methodist Episcopal Church found its roots in the Methodist Episcopal Church, consequently much of their structure of the societies and organizations are very similar. When the African Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in 1787, Sarah Bass Allen, wife of the organizer and the first consecrated bishop of the A.M.E. Church, Richard Allen, was moved by the shabby appearance of some ministers as they came to conference to report on their labors. She secured, with the help of some of the ladies, more adequate apparel for the women.

Sarah Allen was the first woman missionary in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Richard Allen, seeing all the activities his wife and other women were involved in, decided to organize the women into the Dorcas Society in 1824. In 1827, Sarah Allen organized the Daughter of the Conference to meet some of the needs of the new church. She worked closely by the side of her husband and encouraged him in his stride for religious freedom. Sarah Allen lived to be eighty-five years of age when she died on July 16, 1849 in Philadelphia, PA.¹²

Approximately forty-seven years later in the *Christian Recorder* of February 17, 1874, the editor, Reverend B. T. Tanner carried an open letter to the bishops' wives stating the following:

After much consideration and prayer, I address you as representative women of the church—Mrs. Bishop Quinn, Mrs. Bishop Payne, Mrs. Bishop Wayman, Mrs. Bishop Campbell, Mrs. Bishop Brown, Mrs. Bishop Shorter, and Mrs. Bishop Ward—what

¹¹ Ibid., 16.

¹² Octavia W. Dandridge, *A History of the Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 1874-1987* (Nashville, TN: AMEC Publishing House, 1987).

are the women of our church doing? No complaint of the past, faithfully did they do the work Providence laid before them, but what of the present? Do not ask what there is for the women of Zion to do. We reply very much. It is not our purpose to tell everything they might do but rather of one thing they ought to do. They ought to organize a Women's Missionary Society. And this moment our missionary work in Haiti lies upon its oars, and why? The church, with all its acknowledged riches, cannot afford to assist them. Will you not, my dear sisters, lead off in the organization of the Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Church which will supply the means by which Haiti shall live? Accepting the A.M.E. Church for an example, what victories have they achieved by organization?¹³

After much prayer and thoughtful consideration of the challenge, Bishop James A. Shorter issued the call and the first meeting was at the home of Reverend J. A. Handy on 16th Street, near Washington D.C. on May 8, 1874. At a second meeting a few days later, Mrs. C. M. Burley submitted a proposed constitution that was adopted and replicated after authorization to print one thousand copies of the previous letter that was read to the Bishops' wives. Other women were invited to join this new venture, establishing Mite Missionary Societies in local churches. The copies would serve as a guide. The Mite Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Church was proposed to be a strong arm of the church, especially with the work in Haiti. Little did the ladies realize at the time, but an international organization of more than 800,000 women would be born from their work.

The valiant women of the Mite engaged in sewing, packing, and shipping clothing, medical supplies, educational materials—books, pencils, tablets, and crayons—overseas or to other needy areas. They continued to assist struggling churches and ministers in their individual communities and gave enormous support, considering the time given to schools and colleges sponsored by the A.M.E. Church.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴ Ibid., 5.

Soon after the founding of the Parent Missionary Society in 1874, the women of the western and southern part of the United States felt isolated. They thought that they could effect more involvement with an organization in their regions. In September of 1893, a group met with Bishop Henry McNeal Turner to arrange such an organization. The first meeting was held at South Bend, Indiana in 1895. A constitution and program of operation was outlined under the name of the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. At the General Conference in Wilmington, North Carolina in May of 1896, the proposed organization was approved. The Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society contributed directly to the work in South Africa. They also gave assistance to the widows and orphans of overseas missionaries.

They recommended using members from both organizations as officers and perpetuated the two memorial committees by using the names of both; hence came the Handy-Simmons Scholarship and the Tanner-Turner Memorial Committee. The merger committee met in Birmingham, Alabama in February of 1943 and submitted a report to the Bishop's Council. The General Conference in session (again in Philadelphia in the year 1944) approved the merger. Thus, these two strong auxiliaries of the A.M.E. Church became united as the Women's Missionary Society.¹⁵ When the two organizations merged, the two youth groups became one department. Today the youth work bears the name Young People's Division or YPD.

¹⁵ Ibid, 10.

Twentieth Century Women In Mission

A significant example of a woman from yesterday who was engaged in mission was Sojourner Truth. Ms. Truth, after being freed, became a national figure in the struggle for the liberation of blacks and women.¹⁶ Truth drew on her faith in God as she spoke against the folly and injustice of her time. Despite poverty, an inability to read, being black at a time when blacks were not considered human, and being a woman when women were belittled, Truth was able to shape her own life and the lives of others in the struggle for human rights. In her honor, the African Methodist Episcopal Church has established the Sojourner Truth Society, which consists of missionary women who travel mainly to other countries with the intent of evangelizing with words, works, and wonders. One of the greatest and humblest missionary workers in India was our beloved Mother Theresa. One internationally acclaimed sisterhood that has drawn heavily from the Third World for its sacrificial volunteers has been the Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Theresa. This mission was born in India in 1949 after Sister Theresa left the security of her religious community and, with the help of a few Bengali volunteers, began her life in ministering to the “poorest of the poor.”¹⁷

Women In Mission Of The Writer

While examining the women of yesterday, I could not leave this section without writing about my grandparents. They did not belong to any missionary society but mission work is what I saw them doing. They had a heart for those who did not have what they

¹⁶ Carelton Mabee, *Sojourner Truth* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), ix.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 352.

did. I saw them feed and show concern for people whom many would not let into their houses. True mission work is about meeting a need while making people feel at home. That is why it is mandatory that a missionary have a heart for all people at all times. Missionary action is not based on the constitution of an organization. Mission work does not have to be within the boundaries of the church. It is touching the lives of those whom God places in your path. I am extremely grateful for the following women who have done mission work for the love of all humanity: Alberta Leslie, Ethel Prear, and Mable Wheat. Mrs. Nancy Stokes, the wife of the late Bishop Rembert Stokes, was the Episcopal Supervisor from 1976-1988, serving women in the Missionary Society in West Africa, Southern Africa, and Texas in the United States. Mrs. Stokes, while initiating spiritual growth in the women, taught those in Africa how to be self sufficient and those in the states how to show compassion for those who have less. In becoming a member of the missionary society, we are making a commitment to God. Periodically as we check ourselves and the growth of the society, we must check ourselves in our growth with our relationship with God through prayer. Mrs. Stokes, although retired, is still actively involved with the missionary work of the church and remains in contact with our African sisters.

Women who belong to Greater Allen A.M.E. Church who do their work in another building, that is called the Pollack Building, are not members of the Women's Missionary Society, but their mission is clear.

This group of women for over twenty years has continued to feed the homeless and hungry; supplied the food pantry and provided clothing twice a week for fifty weeks per year. At one time, there were four servers and one cook. Now, there are only two servers and one cook. The cook is an eighty-year-old woman named Lois Thornton and

the servers or volunteer assistants are Cora Harvey, Rebecca Harvey, Lula Lenyoun (who can no longer serve because of illness) and Betty J. Tucker, who is also ill. Lois Thornton had done a number of things to keep this project running. She not only cooks the food, but she purchases the food.

The recipients of the food and clothing service have created a bond with the volunteers. They often come back to say “thank you” after they have found a job, or have been clean from drugs for six months. One woman came back to let them know that she had now been drug free for three years. This is true missionary work.

Another woman of the Greater Allen community who is involved in missionary work is Warkoneta Tucker. Every year Ms. Tucker travels to Haiti to deliver gifts to children and to assist in planning an annual women’s day program. While in Haiti, Ms. Tucker painted beds and provided food, toys, washcloths, and other things to the children she served. She continues to make an annual trip to Haiti so that she can give donated items to the families she serves.

A.M.E. General Historical

The A.M.E. Church is a member of the family of Methodist Churches. Its founder and first active bishop, Richard Allen, felt that no religious sect or denomination would suit the capacity of his people as well as did Methodism with its emphasis upon the plain and simple gospel, which the unlearned could understand, and its orderly system of rules and regulations, which the underdeveloped needed. He felt that Methodism had what the “African” needed to encourage him to make progress, to worship God freely, and to fill every office for which he had the capability.

The “Africans” who started the A.M.E. Church were very poor and most of them could not read nor write. Yet, under the leadership of Richard Allen, they managed to buy an old blacksmith shop and move it to a lot at the corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where they organized Bethel A.M.E. Church which stands today as one of the historic shrines in Philadelphia.

In time, other “African” churches were started in Baltimore, Maryland; Salem, New Jersey; Attlesboro, Pennsylvania; Wilmington, Delaware and other places in the United States. In the year 1816, these churches came together and formed the A.M.E. Church. Richard Allen was elected to serve as the first active bishop.

Today the A.M.E. Church has 18 active bishops and more than a million members scattered throughout the 50 States in the U.S.A., the Dominion of Canada, South America, West Africa, South Africa, and the West Indies.

History of Greater Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church

The African Methodist Episcopal Denomination was founded in 1787 in Philadelphia, PA by Richard Allen and a small group of his followers. They had formerly been members of St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church. Their first General Conference was held in Philadelphia in 1816 with 16 delegates. Rev. Richard Allen was elected the first Bishop of the Church at that conference. Allen A.M.E. Church is a member of this denomination.

Mother Mary Scott organized a Sunday school on Fitch Street in 1890 and from that, a Mission was organized under the direction of Presiding Elder C. D. White, North Ohio Conference, September 13, 1892. Gathered around him were such gallant souls as Daniel Bell, Mariah Williams, Jane Fox, Lewis Woodward and others who made the

dream of the “Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church” a reality. That small frame mission building strikes an interesting parallel with the old blacksmith shop in Philadelphia where Richard Allen founded the first African Methodist Church. Our first site was used from 1892 to 1907, a period of fifteen years.

Nineteen hundred and seven stood out as an essential year in the rich history of Allen. It marked the transition from mission status to a full-fledged church. Rev. W. H. Coleman is credited with this accomplishment. Rev. T. S. Woodwon, then pastor of Wayman A.M.E., our sister church, and Mrs. Mary Scott gave moral support and financial help to the accelerated movement. The purchase of “new” Allen involved the mortgaging of several members’ homes. Brother and Sister Hary Snell, Sister Mariah Williams and others mortgaged their homes to purchase the first church. It was bought from a congregation on Wayne Avenue and transported across town to its new site, 231 S. Euclid Avenue. Rev. Coleman increased Allen’s membership from 18 to 78 and reduced the mortgage debt to \$1,800.00.

The third phase of Allen’s steady climb was marked with the task of completely reviving a spirit of cooperation within her own membership. Rev. C. M. Hogan and Rev. A. A. Challenger met this challenge quite forcefully and, in doing so, their work attracted much attention from other churches. Our small church made steady progress under the supervision of all its pastors. Rev. H. H. Upthegrove raised the building and constructed a new basement and foundation; he also wired for electricity and removed the mortgage debt. Reverends Forte and Young assumed the task of decorating inside and out during their respective stays. Rev. C. H. Young purchased the first parsonage, which was located at 319 College Street and adopted the envelope system. Rev. M. M. Lewis reduced the

indebtedness considerably, increased the membership fifty percent, purchased the adjoining lot, remodeled the parsonage and established the church bulletin.

Much can be said of Allen's colorful history during this phase of development. From 1917 to 1927 marked the groundwork state that later pushed Allen into the limelight of the Annual Conferences. Rev. A. J. Allen served as pastor from 1927-1931. He organized one of the most unique Usher Boards in the Third Episcopal in May of 1940; Rev. Frank F. Mason filled the unexpired term of Rev. A. J. Allen. Rev. Mason was later elevated to Presiding Elder of the District. Under the pastorage of Dr. L. C. Ridley, former professor of Psychology at Wilberforce University, a dynamic preacher and orator of national renown, Allen Chapel was placed in the Springfield District. Allen Chapel moved into her own and wore the mantel well as leader of the District. This was followed rapidly by Allen Chapel's leadership in the Annual Conference.

The war-torn years of 1943 marked Allen's initial effort that distinguished this phase of history as the building era. The original Building Fund Committee was organized under Rev. J. W. Storms, consisting of Walter Gibson, K. P. Tate, Oliver Robinson, James Bryant, Ida Goings, Fanny Dawson, Bessie Harvey and Bish Thompson. Rev. J. W. Storms later became Presiding Elder in the Pittsburgh Conference.

Rev. L. G. Long purchased the corner lot and moved the dwelling there to another location, clearing the way for architectural planning. A large amount of funds for the building was raised during this administration and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 5, 1946. Rev. Long also organized the Young Adult Choir. Rev. Garr Davis came to Allen in 1947. During his administration, Stewardess Board No. 3, the Courtesy Club and the Minute Women were organized. Rev. Davis displayed a Christian-like cheerfulness while discharging his duty as pastor.

Rev. M. C. Pollock came upon the scene in 1949 and succeeded in increasing a new faith in the idea of wanting to build. His first thought, however, was to gain the confidence of the people and then to organize the church. Having accomplished this, he immediately turned his efforts to a new and greater Allen. The building fund consisted of a total of \$24,832 at that time and was later increased to \$32,000.00. The old frame building was completely destroyed by fire on December 16, 1951. It marked the largest tragedy in the rich and colorful history of Allen, which later proved to be a blessing in disguise. There was no other choice; building was inevitable. The fire insurance netted \$12,000.00. Churches of all denominations came to our rescue, both spiritually and financially during those dark hours. The church officers and members accepted St. John Baptist Church's offer to use their Sunday School room to hold services until such time that Allen could worship in her new building. A new building fund committee was organized. This committee accepted the challenge and vowed to stick until the job was done. Lloyd Lewis was designated Chairman with the following persons on the committee: Mable Taylor Nelson, Harry Johns, Nathan Gill, who was later succeeded by Nash Alexander, Kenneth P. Tate, F. Arlington Young and Dr. J. Milton Dasher.

Nineteen hundred and fifty-two will remain as one of the most memorable years in Allen's history. The building-fund kick-off banquet, which was held February 7, 1952, started another series of rallies and donations that brought the new structure closer and closer. Spring of '52 ushered in the ground breaking and actual digging for the basement of the first unit. Architects, contractors and laborers worked hard and consistently with Rev. Pollock and members of the Building Committee. The building committee (not to be confused with the building fund committee) consisted of Rev. Pollock, Jerome Miller, Arthur Goodnight and James Bryant. Rev. Pollock, an outstanding pulpiteer and one of

the strong giants in the A.M.E. Church, rallied the people, overcame the odds and the difficulties, and built the first unit of a new Allen A.M.E. Church which was renamed Greater Allen A.M.E. Church. This unit, known as the Educational Department, was built at a cost of \$80,000.00. The first service in the new church was held in October of 1952. After General Conference in 1952, the South Ohio Conference was organized and Greater Allen A.M.E. Church was placed in the Dayton District. Rev. Pollock stayed at Greater Allen until 1956.

Rev. W. F. Ogleton purchased and paid for the parsonage at 515 S. Summit Street and removed the Church's mortgage debt. He also organized the Junior Church, the Cherub and Cherubette Choirs. His administration, 1956-1963, was marked with much warmth and fire. In 1963 Rev. E. T. Wikle paid the Church's indebtedness and purchased two lots on Howell Street for parking. Rev. Wikle wrought a good work here and was later elevated to the Presiding Eldership of the Dayton District.

Rev. U. A. Hughey, who had the longest tenure of any pastor in the history of the church, served from 1965-1977. He was very active in community affairs and a strong advocate of human rights. He raised a substantial amount of money and purchased much equipment, as well as six lots, including the land on which the new "Greater Allen" is now situated. The Hand Bell Choir was organized during his administration. He was an ingenious pastor. In 1977, Payne Theological Seminary needed a President. The Rev. U. A. Hughey, a scholar of the first magnitude, was appointed to serve. Following his administration, the Rev. Dr. Simon A. Perkins, Jr., came to Greater Allen. In less than two years, with the outstanding leadership of Dr. Simon Perkins, Jr., the parsonage was renovated inside and out at a cost of \$11,000.00 which was paid in cash. Dr. Perkins

increased the membership and attendance. He paid off all debts and built the new edifice in which we are now worshipping.

This edifice will accommodate 396 people in the Sanctuary and 200 in the overflow. It was built at a cost of \$300,000.00, which includes the furnishings. Mr. William Berry was the architect and Mr. Clifton Black was the General Contractor, both from Flint, Michigan. The Cornerstone was laid and the new church dedicated on August 12, 1979. In October of 1979, Dr. Perkins was relieved and the Reverend E. B. Jordan was assigned to the pastoral leadership of Greater Allen.

Rev. Jordan continued the rich tradition of spiritual worship that had become the hallmark of Greater Allen Church. He served effectively for two years and then was replaced by a young visionary and builder, Charles L. Scott, Sr. in November of 1981.

Rev. Scott's tenure was marked by progressive leadership, organization and an aggressive determination to move the church forward. His enduring legacy to Greater Allen would be the erection of a massive multi-purpose building at the cost of nearly a half million (\$500,000) dollars and that the church would see fit to name it the Charles L. Scott, Sr. Fellowship Hall. Dedicated in the summer of 1988, this twenty-five hundred square-foot facility can seat 400 people auditorium style or 250 people in a banquet format. The hall has an elevated stage with special lighting and enough room to play basketball half court. The building features the 35-seat Mayo Chapel, the Ethel C. Prear Library and five comfortable classrooms around the perimeter of the main hall. Rev. Scott was, in addition to his role as pastor of Greater Allen, a very formidable figure in the Dayton religious and political communities. He served with great energy and effectiveness for eight years until he was relieved by the current pastor, Reverend Earl G. Harris.

Reverend Harris, who was assigned to Greater Allen in November of 1989, began his ministry with a program of rapid debt reduction. His goal is to liquidate the major debt with all deliberate speed and thereby save the congregation as much as a million dollars in interest payments. In addition, a program of upgrading equipment in the fellowship hall, kitchen and the development of a sound room with professional sound and recording equipment is nearly complete. Under Rev. Harris' watch, the church has continued to acquire nearly all the land surrounding the church. Pastor Harris continues to project the ministry of the church to the Dayton community through economic development, social service and ecumenical activities.

One of Pastor Harris' enduring accomplishments has been the opening of Greater Allen as a learning laboratory for budding seminarians. Students from both Payne Theological Seminary and United Theological Seminary have found nurturing under the watchful eyes of Pastor Harris and Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey, Senior Associate of Greater Allen. The students are serving and developing experience in the areas of parish, prison and hospital chaplaincy. There are presently fifteen students training under their care. The church has made rapid progress under the administration of all its pastors down to the present. It should be fixed firmly in mind, however, that prevailing economic conditions exert a marked influence upon the character of a given administration and, for this reason among many others, the work of some pastors may appear more or less illustrious than others. Also, projects were often initiated under the direction of one minister and completed by another, in which instance both are deserving of the credit. Many giants have passed this way; we are proud to have had all of them. All of these ministers made their contributions to bring Greater Allen where it is today.

Even though the A.M.E. Church has a missionary society, the effectiveness of the missionary society in each local context is based upon how mission-minded the congregation is. There will be an education program instituted for the purpose of teaching people the importance of missions. Missionary work must begin in childhood, so that when the children become older, missions will not be strange to them. People who may genuinely have the heart or desire to carry out a program need education. All must understand what the mission of the missionary society really is. Once all are educated, the missions will have more efficient workers.

Theological Focus

What does theology truly mean in missionary endeavors? The *American Webster's Dictionary* defines theology in this way: "Theology is concerned with the study and analyzation of God's attributes and relation to the universe." 1) One theologian states, "Because Christian theology is human speech about God, it is always related to historical situations, and thus assertions are culturally limited. 2) Generally, in all forms of interpretation of God and God's activity, the ultimate reality of God-talk appears to be in one's experience of what God means to them and what they mean to Him.

Jesus commanded us in Matthew 19:19 "Love thy neighbor as thyself." The question that has been raised in my circumstances is, who is my neighbor? Jesus went willingly into unfamiliar territory when he ministered among the religious leaders of his day. He cared for the outcast, fed the hungry, and solicited children to come into His presence. When we think of the missionary work of God in Christ, we should not hesitate to do for others without complaint and with an energy that is pleasing to God. The mission and purpose of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is to minister to the

spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional needs of all people by spreading Christ's liberating gospel through word and deed. This principle was the spirit of the free African Society in which the A.M.E. Church evolved. We are to seek and save the lost and serve the needs of humanity through a continuing program of: 1) preaching the gospel, 2) feeding the hungry, 3) clothing the naked, 4) housing the homeless, 5) cheering the fallen, 6) providing jobs for the jobless, and 7) visiting the hospitals, nursing homes, and caring for them.

What do Liberation Theology, Womanist Theology, and other theologies say of God's presence and activity in missionary work? While we cannot fully understand God, we can know God's revelation of God's self through the names that He is called. These names speak clearly of the attributes of God and the relationship to us as believers. Some of the names and attributes are as follows:

Jehovah/Yahweh – He is Lord

Jehovah/jireh – The Lord will provide

Jehovah/nissi – The Lord is my banner

Jehovah/shalom – The Lord is peace

Jehovah/tseboath – The Lord of hosts

In the missionary world (visible and invisible) of the church, we the members are all the body of Christ. God is present providing peace, sovereign in power, and provides insight into his love for all people. As believers in the risen Christ, our task is to be led by the grace of God and not the grace of "ritual and or doctrine."

The Women's Missionary Society states, "We, the Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, do endeavor to make possible opportunities and resources to meet the changing need and concerns of people throughout the world; to

ordain this society and offer a fellowship so strong, a message so convincing and so enthusiastically contagious, that the gospel through us will be at work in the world.”⁵⁴

That statement represents the call to all Christians everywhere and in every generation. It is my opinion that we are truly Christians only when we have the zeal to go out and share our resources and our times with others. God provided for Abraham when he headed to kill his son on the altar by providing a “ram” in the bush. God provided for Jacob and his sons when there was a famine in the land. God provided for the Israelites while they were in the wilderness. God provided for all sinners by giving up his only begotten son to die for our sins. Throughout the history of humanity, God has provided for God’s people. This example demonstrates to us as missionaries that to care for others is the will for God in our lives.

⁵⁴ African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrine and Discipline* (Nashville, TN: A.M.E.C. Sunday School Union, 2002-2004), 356.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Researchers start their work from the premise that knowledge is attainable and that finding truth is possible. This quest may be long and difficult, but results are assured. Without this optimistic mindset, little research would take place. The research mindset is characterized by objectivity, focus, clearly set forth presuppositions, and logical organization.¹

With Paul, a researcher must say: “One thing I do” (Phil 3:13). Just as Paul did (v. 14), we focus on the problem and its solution. Research thinking must fly straight as an arrow without deviating from the goal. For that reason, you cannot begin researching until you have determined your problem and purpose, what needs fixing, and how you are going to do it.²

Descriptive research does exactly what its name says: It describes, usually one or more characteristics of a group of people, technically called a population. The purpose of descriptive research is to make reality known. On the basis of the descriptions, conclusions may be reached and decisions made.³

¹ Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 42.

² Ibid., 43.

³ Ibid., 126.

Descriptive research usually studies a situation at a given moment in time. A specialized type of descriptive research studies a person, case, or situation over time.⁴ At this time, the writer's purpose is to establish the knowledge of the community in the church and the Women's Missionary Society as an organization in the community as to where they stand in understanding the true mission of the Mission Society.

This project was designed to educate, train and revitalize the mission of the Missionary Society in the African Methodist Episcopal Church – 3rd District, in general, and Greater Allen A.M.E. church particular. The Missionary Society at the Greater Allen A.M.E. church, in the author's opinion, has not functioned according to its mission, the purpose of the organization as listed below.

Mission Statement/Preamble to the Mission Statement

We, the Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, do endeavor to make possible opportunities and resources to meet the changing needs and concerns of people throughout the world, do ordain this society, and offer a fellowship so strong, a message so convincing and so enthusiastically contagious, that the Gospel through us will be at work in the world.

The Purpose

- ❖ The purpose of the organization shall be to help people to grow in the knowledge and experience of God through His Son Jesus Christ, through continual Christian training, as well as individual and collective mission works, thus challenging them to respond to God's redemptive plan in the world.
- ❖ To seek fellowship with people in all lands by initiating and maintaining a support system that will enable all people to achieve fulfillment.
- ❖ To provide materials and programs which will enable every members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to become mission conscious and involved in the same way.

⁴ Ibid., 127.

- ❖ To coordinate and unify the work of our connectional structure for maximum involvement and effectiveness.
- ❖ To be the advocate for editorial and educational arms of the society.
- ❖ To serve as an advocate for human rights.⁵

What Can I Expect as a Member of the W.M.S.?

- ❖ Training, education and understanding of the organization, its mission and purpose.
- ❖ Recognition of your contributions as a member of a service organization dedicated to the work of the Church of Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Membership in affiliate groups such as Church Women United, World Federation of Methodist Women, National Council of Negro Women and others.

What are my Responsibilities as a Member?

- ❖ To be an active member of the local A.M.E. Church.
- ❖ To attend meetings regularly.
- ❖ To understand and be supportive of the organization and its purpose.
- ❖ To keep informed about programs and on going concerns of the W.M.S.
- ❖ To be active on all levels of the W.M.S.

In October, the Edith Hodge Missionary Society met and the meeting proceeded as outlined. They had their devotion and followed the agenda for their meeting. After old and new business was discussed, they went to the topic—the good for the order. It was then discussed that the organization has not been true to its mission and purpose. Some admitted not wanting to be labeled troublemakers. They did not want to go against the grain. Most of them knew that there was not much going on, if anything at all. The members shared many comments and were willing to do what they could to fulfill the mission and the purpose.

⁵ African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrine and Discipline*, 356.

Comments: as written by Context

Q. I believe the local church could be involved in mission outreach.

A. There is much need in the community and in our own church.

Q. I believe the Missionary Society is not visible enough.

A. People don't know what we do. We just need to do more with kids and adults.

Q. I believe the local church could be involved in mission outreach.

A. Too many churches are internal. There's a world we need to impact.

Q. I believe the Missionary Society is not visible enough.

A. Other than at Christmas and Thanksgiving where are they?

Q. Other denominations are more effective in their missionary work.

A. I've spoken to others and they are going into the community and into the third world countries with their money and other possessions. Comment—we need to know what other denominations are doing in the work of missions.

Q. How informed are you about the Missionary Society?

A. Minimal informed—not involved as in many years past.

Q. I believe the Missionary Society is not visible enough.

A. Not enough persons are showing willingness in service towards others. Not consistent nor committed. When people are willing to be committed in true faithful service, and not by way of how it will benefit them in a personal way; the world will become a greater economical source in love, peace, and faith of Jesus (God's) directions of everlasting works through forgiveness, love, and mercy. May we all have a heart of love, forgiveness, and repentance thru Christ our Lord always

The writer shared ideas of what the organization could do to respond to the needs and concerns of people in the Dayton community and throughout the world. It was agreed that a questionnaire would be devised. After some soul searching one was compiled.

Questionnaire surveys given to the community in the church and to the context and evaluations completed by the participants were utilized to affirm or deny the basic assumptions of the researcher. John W. Creswell in his book, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, maintains that, "The only reality is that which can be structured by the individuals involved in the researcher's situation."⁶ This hypothesis was proven correct at the beginning of the project. After the first session, the project was lifted from the writer and became the reality of the participants.

In this study the writer attempted to explore the workings of the UMS in observing the strengths shown in the culture and the tradition transmission of servitude throughout the generations. Each participant's struggle allowed her to view their situation as what WMS is to each individually.

Another methodology was the utilization of the writer's Clinical Pastoral Education training. Each participant was able to become self-aware and critically reflect upon her missionary involvement. This allowed them to have a better awareness of "how and why" they performed as members of WMS. From this, they received a greater sense of appreciation for commitment to mission work that they transmitted not only to their families, but also to their church community.

⁶ John W. Creswell, *Research Design, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 2.

The methodology of the researcher was primarily that of an observer. She utilized field notes, verbatim tape recordings, and wrote her feelings, thoughts, and inspirations in her journal throughout the process. Sharing her own feelings was kept to a minimum and used as a facilitating mechanism when appropriate.

The researcher used four tools that revealed the need and success of this model of ministry. They were: 1) survey questionnaire, 2) training guide, 3) pre/post assessments, and 4) the writer's personal journal.

Missionary Society Survey Questionnaire

Over fifty percent of the members who responded were members of the Edith Hodge WMS, Mary Scott Unit and Young People's Department (YPD). They indicated that education was needed to raise the knowledge of the MS in the church. They also responded that they would support the training of the membership and the church on what it is to be called. This tool provided much needed information, which charted the course and success of this project.

Training Guide

This tool was instrumental in facilitating the sharing of their knowledge and experiences as a member of the WMS. It was discovered early that more time was needed and time and space was at a premium at the present. The last session was taped in the format of a verbatim recording. One of the insights for the researcher revealed the benefit of getting in touch with the MS members personally, as they have attempted to serve faithfully on the board. The theological reflection for the writer was that God sent Jesus as

a servant. Using faith as a guide allows missionaries to truly appreciate God's love and compassion for those whom God loves.

Pre/Post Evaluation Forms

From the beginning of the process, the participants indicated that they had a clear understanding of the project and that the researcher had adequately communicated the objects of this model ministry. The post assessment showed that the participants felt they had benefited from the experience and had been spiritually refreshed. This tool also measured the success of the project.

Personal Journal

The most important tool, for the author, was her personal journal. Early in the project, the writer was advised to start recording observations, feelings, reflections, and inspirations night and day during the course of this project. Utilizing a journal provided the author with the opportunity to observe feelings as another measuring mechanism.

As she observed feelings and reactions of herself and the participants, she grew in humility and appreciation for the sisters who had shared their experiences. She was able to "relive" the depth of her training as a missionary in the past. She experienced growth and strength in using this journal for personal reflection.

These four tools put "flesh" on this model of ministry. Each tool was used in the process of the successful completion of the project.

Context Analysis

The writer's context is Greater Allen A.M.E. Church in Dayton, Ohio where she is one of the Associate Ministers. The writer has been a member of Greater Allen A.M.E. from youth to present. Greater Allen was not always the name. It once was Allen A.M.E. and before that it was a mission. A woman named Mary Scott organized a Sunday school in her home on Fitch Street in 1890 and from that, a mission was organized. In 1907 it was transitioned from mission status to a full-fledged church. In 1951, a fire destroyed the frame house we met in on Euclid Ave. and the writer remembers this well. When the church was rebuilt in 1952, its name became Greater Allen A.M.E.

The writer has been part of the missionary society at the church for over fifty years and was excited to know that many others have a concern about the society but were reluctant to speak about it.

When they met, it had to be understood that mission is the task for every member, not just a few. Greater Allen A.M.E. was formed as a mission. The group agreed that the one way to reach the church is through education. Generally, people do not know what mission and mission work is. The church is a community that is called apart and sent out by Jesus to carry forward his worldwide ministry to make people whole. It is in this sending out that the church comes into existence. We cannot think of a church without mission.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

At the beginning meeting in November, 2002, the writer began this project with the assumption that members of an A.M.E.C., and especially those members who belonged to the Missionary Society at Greater Allen A.M.E. church, needed a ministry where they could either acquire knowledge about the Missionary Society or build upon what they already knew. The writer believed that not only at Greater Allen A.M.E. church but other A.M.E. churches needed this training. The overall assumption was based on the need for knowledge of the following: Do we know the purpose of the Connectional Women's Missionary Society of the African Methodist Episcopal Church?

1. The purpose of this organization shall be to help each woman and youth grow in the knowledge and experience of God through His Son Jesus Christ, thus challenging them to respond to God's redemptive plan in the world.
2. To seek fellowship with women in other lands by initiating and maintaining a support system that will enable all to achieve fulfillment.
3. To realize the purpose, the Women's Missionary Society of African Methodist Episcopal Church shall endeavor to make possible opportunities

and resources to meet the changing needs and concerns of women and youth through intensive training, recruitment, and Christian witnessing.

4. To fulfill our responsibility in the mission of the church to home and overseas. We offer a fellowship so strong, a message so convincingly interpreted and imparted and an enthusiasm so contagious that the Gospel through us will be at work so that we will be able to draw humankind into the fellowship of love.

5. To encourage every A.M.E. to become actively involved in mission work.¹

These assumptions were not disputed in the process, and were handled gently.

Lastly, the writer asserts that, if one does not feel comfortable in sharing what they don't know within the group, they will seek other avenues to accomplish this need, such as the individuals who have been here for some years and are known for sharing.

Some of the participants expressed what they thought they knew, while others kept quiet. One was concerned that the Missionary Society wasn't visible enough. What could we do in our community? Another was not aware of what the discipline says they should be doing. Another was concerned about how to handle the pastor who keeps your hands tied from progress. The discussion went well and all was said and done with love.

After the researcher's assumption was discussed, the group began to look at designing the model.

¹ African Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrine and Discipline*, 356,357.

Process of Designing the Model

This section will discuss the areas:

- ❖ Objective of Questionnaire and Model
- ❖ Comments from Participants
- ❖ Context Associates Involvement

Five members of the Missionary Society met at each of the three sessions. The most important step for the writer was to solicit prayer from everyone and, in particular, her prayer partner.

The author's Professional Associate advised her to allow the group to come from volunteers. She followed her advice and the Context Associates began the process. The participants were invited by letter on December 1, 2002 to begin the process of sharing the information needed to complete this undertaking.

Objective of the Questionnaire and Model

The basic objective of the questionnaire was to poll the members in the church in order to confirm or deny the writer's assumption. The model objective was to 1) Determine how informed one is about the Missionary Society, 2) determine the importance of the Missionary Society, and 3) Would interest be more if you felt this was an important mission in the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Management of Literature Review

The writer did her literature research at United Theological Seminary and Payne Theological Seminary Library. There is an enormous amount of material on missionaries

and the different denominations and their history, but not what she was looking for. After leaving the library, she felt overwhelmed. The writer prayed for some time before driving off. That weekend, she met with her Professional Associate and related her experience at the library of not being able to find what she needed. The writer told her there may not be any literature about the A.M.E.C. out there. The writer remembered thinking that this work would be the catalyst for further research.

For two months, the writer sorted and resorted, read and reread the information. The writer was frustrated concerning her direction not being able to grasp anything from her own denomination. The writer went from one book to another, and one article to another, until she found one book written by Darren Walter. The title was, *The People-Magnet Church: Attracting Your Community to Christ*. She proceeded to relate to this author and his study in light of her own experience.

Context Associates' Involvement

The Context Associates met monthly from October 2002 through December 2002. One meeting was held at the Professional Associate's home, the other two at one of the Context Associate's homes. Each meeting began with prayer and an agenda was used. The meetings were as follows:

On October 12, 2002 at 3:00 p.m., the first meeting was held at the home of the Professional Associate. It began and ended in prayer. Each person had an opportunity to review the proposal and the group discussed their role as Context Associates. Input was solicited through a question and answer period. They were given the following tasks: 1) develop survey questions, and 2) help devise a cover letter for the actual survey. They

were also solicited to develop a training guide and pre and post evaluation forms as their assignment.

At this meeting, a comment was made, asking, how can we get more young adults into the society, and get past the stigma that M.S. is designed for older adults?

The October 19, 2002 meeting was held at the home of one of the Context Associates, beginning and ending with prayer by the Associates. Each person met their assignments and dialogued about the progress they had made. Time was spent talking about how anxious they were for the project to begin. One after another expressed our need to do more. One could not believe how limited she was in knowing the works.

The last meeting was held at the same location on November 16, 2002. The letters were sent to the Context. The training guide was drafted and ready for submission. An R.S.V.P. deadline was set for December 8, 2002. The evaluation forms were also ready for typing.

The mechanics of the distribution of the questionnaire had not been determined. Several suggestions were made, including personal contact. On December 8, the group met after church service and agreed to go with personal contact and pass them out. The Context Associates agreed to accomplish this portion of the task. From December 15, 2002 until December 29, 2002, questionnaires were distributed to the Context.

Project Field Experience

When the project began, four sessions were established and time allocated, but as the project developed its own reality and due to unforeseen circumstances, these sessions were altered. From the beginning, the sessions had to be rearranged. The first meeting was

held on February 1, 2003 for one hour, on February 22, 2003 for two hours, and on March 1, 2003 for two hours.

From the beginning, the writer was disappointed due to lateness in getting started, realizing there is a time frame they are in with the project. The writer could not allow the group to see the hurt she felt in attempting to get sessions set up. Prayer was the key to advancement. The first session was changed due to meeting room space. There had been a mix-up in meetings for that day and all rooms were taken. The next Monday, February 3, 2003, the writer met with the church secretary to verify the next meetings on February 22, 2003 and March 1, 2003 and to secure a room for the sessions. Frustration was one emotion that set in and prayer was operative daily.

It was first believed that this model would consist of four sessions, but due to the scheduling restraints and unforeseen circumstances, the sessions were revised to three sessions. A training guide (See Appendix C) was utilized which consisted of an agenda. Five members of M.S. met at each session.

It was brought out that some were not aware that men could belong to the Society, but had no voting rights. One of the members was approached with that question and she said how small she felt not being able to answer. One person spoke up saying that was why all need to be educated. The writer facilitated questions and provided specific references regarding missionary work and workers.

Summary of the Sessions

Session 1 – February 1, 2003, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

The session was opened with devotions led by the participator. The writer welcomed them to the first session and apologized for the inconvenience this morning not having a meeting room available. The participants were understanding and it didn't discourage them or interfere with their enthusiasm and excitement. The survey questionnaire was reviewed and then a pre-test was given. On the pre-test a goal was written for the society and the level of commitment to the society weekly, monthly, semi-annually, and yearly.

We looked at who was in the group and all were members of the Women's Missionary Society and Mary Scott Unit. This revealed to us why the return of the survey might have been low in numbers. The Context doesn't feel it involves them, only the women in the missionary.

The group next shared about what little they knew, even though many have been members for years. The next session, the writer shared with the group about what being a grandparent has mandated her to do concerning mission work. Being a grandparent is an excellent opportunity to present mission work to the youngsters; most children will listen to grandparents. The writer recalled how her grandmothers made such an impact on her and the spirit of serving others. There were others who responded to that discussion and expressed that there was another vehicle to be used in this mission work. We will look at the A.M.E. Discipline and its criterion for missionary. We will also look at scriptures using

the Bible. The meeting was closed with prayer, but on the way to the cars the group was still talking.

Session Two – February 22, 2003, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The session opened with devotions led by participants. The session began with a poem by Susan Polis Schultz, “Nothing Should Divide Us.” Several participants responded to the poem and how it related to who they were. We picked up from the last meeting and spent some time on what the A.M.E. Discipline says. The participants were next invited to express their concerns about the future of the Women’s Missionary Society in the A.M.E.C., and at Greater Allen A.M.E. The participants realized that they weren’t there to change the discipline. They were looking at how they could be productive in their attempt to fulfill it.

Session Three – March 1, 2003, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The session was opened with devotions led by participants. This was the final session. The guest speaker was to discuss her experience in the mission field, however she never could give us a definite time. The participants looked forward to seeing her at the next conference. We moved on. The entire time was spent on commitment to Greater Allen A.M.E. and setting goals for the next conference year. The overview of all sessions was voiced by all. The participants encouraged the research, stating that this was long overdue and suggested she plan another conference for next year getting more of the church community involved. The message has to relay to them that the total church is a mission body. The participants were given a post-assessment form with a request to

complete and return it the following Sunday. Everyone met the requirements on Sunday, March 9, 2003.

A transcript of one taped interview from a member of S.W.M.S. will be included in Appendix D. She represents one of the oldest members in S.W.M.S. Before we came to the end of this session, the participants read the poem, "All Hearts Must Be One," by Susan Polis Schultz.

Post-Assessment Summary

The Post-Assessment form was distributed on March 1, 2003 and returned the following week.

- ❖ Fourteen participants agreed that they benefited from the sessions.
- ❖ They agreed they were informed of a variety of means.
- ❖ They agreed the sessions were adequately introduced and prepared.
- ❖ They agreed they felt comfortable.
- ❖ They agreed that they were spiritually refreshed.
- ❖ They agreed that the facilitator maintained control in an appropriate manner.
- ❖ Two agreed that training could be done at another site (three disagreed).

Pre/Post Assessment Data Results

The pre-assessment form was completed on February 1, 2003 and revealed the following:

- ❖ Fourteen participants indicated that they understood what the project was about.
- ❖ They agreed that they understood their role and that of the researcher.
- ❖ They agreed that they felt such a ministry was important to the church.

- ❖ They agreed that their participation in this ministry is crucial.
- ❖ They agreed their participation in this ministry could help the church.

There were no comments listed on the pre-assessment form. The next conference year will be a busy one if the women of the Missionary Society can hold on and keep their ground on what they want to see happen. There should be some changes visible for those who are called and committed.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

With the launching of this project, the writer was persuaded that there was a need at Greater Allen A.M.E. Church for a ministry that would allow participants to become self-aware and discover their responsibilities as missionaries. She solicited their input concerning the transmission of faith belief, tradition (family, culture, global), and the reciprocity of these values. These participants were able to affirm their strengths, process their weaknesses, and ascertain what measure of success had been accomplished within the community of faith.

The theoretical focus denoted social dynamics that were global in scope and captured the totality of human experience. Biblically, missionaries were able to solicit God's foundation for themselves and the community. They confirmed the dysfunctionality of the community as an ongoing process throughout its institution. However, as in times of old, the community appears to be always under reconstruction, for which missionaries seek God's counsel and guidance for their community.

The model was revised from four weekly sessions to two three-hour sessions. The writer constantly reflected on her inability to control the process. The rearrangement of the schedule was more beneficial for the participants. Each participant reflected on how the influence of their culture and value system affected their lives and their children. Their cultural upbringing and their family heritage allowed each to view their missionary views

as similar yet different due to age differences and changing times. The sessions encouraged and embraced the sharing in storytelling of each participant's experiences in mission work.

Each session demonstrated diversity, solidarity, resilience, inter-relatedness and inter-connectedness within the participants. At times, wonderment pervaded the existence of their experience as missionaries. From the onset, the writer maintained that this task was burdensome. This term is defined as "cumbersome, oppressive, weighty, and troublesome, etc."¹ These definitions were revealed during these sessions. Furthermore the terms love, commitment, and investment of time and energy replicated the over arching feeling that mission work was burdensome.

Reflecting upon the notion that being a missionary is limited to belonging to a missionary society goes beyond that. It is to hear the cry of the world as God hears it.

Lessons Learned

The writer learned that perception is basically a surface identity. In this process, she discovered a more intimate relationship with these participants she had known for 5-30 years. In doing this, she discovered that what was troublesome to her was not just hers. She heard a similar struggle in each participant, but the depth of their tenacity would not have been revealed without the undertaking of this project.

The control and structured part of the writer's personality was challenged and humbled during this experience. She found it comforting to understand that the work involved was her submission to other's needs, consequently enabling a deeper community to emerge. As this experience became frustrating for the writer, she felt growth and satisfaction in this model of ministry for her.

When this model of ministry is performed again in this church, the writer's proposes these suggestions:

- 1) Missionary education is the tool missing from our church and it should be part of the Christian education program;
- 2) It will be a plant that reaches out to everything that the church does;
- 3) The WMS should be the center of the church's life;
- 4) Select a group that includes representatives from both genders.

She feels attention should be paid to representatives of all age groups in order to broaden the perspective of the missionary work.

Summary

The purpose of the project was to describe the true nature of mission as described in biblical scripture and to assess the church's effectiveness in engaging in mission work. The participants' evaluations disclosed that there was great value in being in the company of others who invited the education and training given. The consensus of the project revealed a common thread of being alike in a real sense in spite of age difference. The objectives were met and exceeded the expectation of the writer. Each participant was able to compare and contrast their understanding of strength and process their weakness with the help of God.

¹ Lawrence Urdant, *The American Century Thesaurus* (New York: Warner Books, 1995), 37.

Conclusion

The findings in this project confirmed that revitalizing the mission of the Missionary Society is the vehicle in which positive changes can be met. The success of this ministry demonstrates the need to be an on-going ministry in this church. The writer is certain this ministry would be meaningful in other church settings. The success of this model has reached one of the writer's Baptist sisters here in the city. The writer was requested to implement this model in their church in the future. This is a ministry in which all cultures, traditions, denominations and faith systems share a commonality of servitude.

Implications for Further Research

As missionaries, we are supposed to be called and committed, but it appears that we use the phrase when it is convenient for us. We have seen the change in our churches; we have seen the change in our communities. Realizing that we cannot change the world overnight, we must at least begin somewhere: our homes, our schools, our churches, and our communities. As mission workers, we are to seek the lost. We are losing our children here in our community of faith to drugs, to alcohol, to teen pregnancy, to gangs and violence, and to poverty. Missionaries should be making the difference.

Research needs to look at the church's response to the changes in the community in general. Research needs to study the training of youth in the churches. Are they taught to have concern for others at home, church, school, and the communities where they live or have lived? Missionary work in the A.M.E. church in the United States was unavailable for research today in this timeframe.

Tomorrow will only be as successful if we commit ourselves to making sure our youth are being equipped to do the mission work today. Tomorrow's missionary church will thrive and grow only if we ignite the fire of our churches and get involved in mission work today. We can change things. As we grow, we must continue to assess the progress and what it means to be true to the mission that Christ gave us.

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE LETTERS

Greater Allen A.M.E. Church
1620 West Fifth Street
Dayton, OH 45407
Rev. Earl G. Harris, Pastor

My project in the Doctor of Ministry will begin mid December 2002. My context participants will be drawn from volunteers in our church. It would be my honor and pleasure if you would participate in this training session. The details such as actual beginning and ending date, place of sessions will be determined after acceptance of the participants.

Nothing is required of you beyond your attendance, prayers, enthusiasm, spiritual strength, and willingness to share in this group effort. Each participant is required to attend each session for the program to be effective. Please respond by December 8, 2002. You may reach me at 268-1290. If I am unavailable, please leave a voice mail. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Your sister in Christ,

Rev. Beverly T. Daniels

Enclosure: Proposal Abstract

Rev. Beverly T. Daniels
953 Stolz Avenue
Dayton, OH 45408

December 8, 2002

Greater Allen A.M.E. Member
1620 West Fifth Street
Dayton, OH 45407

Dear Christian Friend:

I am a Doctor of Ministry student at the United Theological Seminary with my focus on Revitalizing the Mission of the Missionary Society.

The research seeks to reclaim our youth and young women through training in missionary work and hopefully it will call for a greater commitment in that training for the adults.

This project is designed to draw on the spiritual service in the ways of our church. The attached survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete. Please note that your participation is completely voluntary. I pray that you will participate in this project by returning the completed questionnaire to me by December 20 or no later than January 11, 2003. If you need further information, please contact me at 268-1290.

Your sister in Christ,

Rev. Beverly T. Daniels

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE AND PRE/POST ASSESSMENTS

Questionnaire and Pre/Post Assessments

True to the Mission, Revitalizing the Mission of the Missionary Society in the African Methodist Episcopal Church – 3rd District

MISSIONARY SOCIETY SURVEY

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO YOU.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- ☐ Altar Guild
- ☐ Courtesy Club
- ☐ Culinary Asst.
- ☐ Ladies Aid Society
- ☐ Lay Organization
- ☐ Edith Hodge Missionary Society
- ☐ Mary Scott Missionary Society
- ☐ Nurses Guild
- ☐ Sunday School
- ☐ Willing Association
- ☐ Vineyard I Comm.
- ☐ Young People's Department
- ☐ Music Department
- ☐ Allen Dancers
- ☐ Angelic Choir
- ☐ Inspirational Choir
- ☐ Voices of Praise
- ☐ Steward Board
- ☐ Stewardess Board
- ☐ Trustee Board
- ☐ Senior Usher Board #1
- ☐ Young Adult Board #2
- ☐ Youth Board #3

II. AGE GROUP

10-18 _____ 18-30 _____ 30-50 _____ Over 50 _____

III. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. How informed are you about the Missionary Society?

☐ Very informed
☐ Minimal informed
☐ Not at all

Comment: _____

2. Importance of Missionary Society:

☐ Very important
☐ Unimportant
☐ No views on subject

3. Would you be interested if you felt this was an important mission in the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe

Comment: _____

IV. PLEASE INDICATE THE RESPONSE THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR ATTITUDE TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	2	3	4	5

1. The Missionary Society in the A.M.E. Church does an excellent job?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. The Missionary Society in Greater Allen A.M.E. does an excellent job?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. I believe the local church could be involved in mission outreach.
(a) If you strongly agree, provide reason why.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Do you believe the concept of mission solely rests with involvement overseas?

1 2 3 4 5

5. I believe we should work in our own community as a priority.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I believe the Missionary Society is for women and children.
(a) If you strongly agree, give reasons.

1 2 3 4 5

7.

8. Other denominations are more effective in their missionary work.
(a) If you strongly agree, give reasons

1 2 3 4 5

9. The Missionary Society is designed for older adults.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Comment:

**True to the Mission, Revitalizing the Mission of the Missionary Society
in the African Methodist Episcopal Church – 3rd District**

PRE-ASSESSMENT TEST

Please indicate the response that best describes your attitude to the following statements.
Your responses will remain confidential.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	2	3	4	5

1. Do you understand what this project is about?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Do you understand your role as a participant?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Do you understand the role of the researcher?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Do you feel such a ministry is important to the church?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Do you feel the welfare of our participation in this ministry is crucial?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Do you feel your participation in this ministry can help your church and your community?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Comments:

**True to the Mission, Revitalizing the Mission of the Missionary Society
in the African Methodist Episcopal Church – 3rd District**

POST-ASSESSMENT TEST

Please indicate the response that best describes your attitude to the following statements.
Your responses will remain confidential.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	2	3	4	5

1. Do you feel you have benefited from this training session?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Were you informed of a variety?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Were the sessions adequately introduced and prepared?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Did you feel uncomfortable during these sessions?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Did you feel spiritually refreshed because of this training?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Did the facilitator maintain control of the group interaction in an operated manner?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Did you feel facility used were appropriate?

1 2 3 4 5

8. Would you like this training to be done at another site?

1 2 3 4 5

9. Comments:

Overall Evaluation of Project. Please be specific. Criticism is welcomed.

APPENDIX C
TRAINING GUIDE

**OVERVIEW TRAINING
IN LOCAL CHURCH SETTINGS**

Presented by: Reverend Beverly T. Daniels

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Overview in Local Church Settings

Session 1

Session 2

Session 3

Session 4

SESSION 1**AGENDA**

Welcome

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Survey Questionnaire Review

A.M.E. Church using the A.M.E. Discipline

Dialogue among group

Closing Prayer

SESSION 2

AGENDA

Devotion

Future of Missionary Society in A.M.E.C.

Mission work using the Bible

Dialogue among group

Closing Prayer

Nothing Should Divide Us

We who inherit the earth
 who cheer the new moon peaking
 through the womb
 who admire the green leaves of summer
 turning to lustrous reds and yellows
 who watch them fall to the ground
 cold, brown and stiff...

We who give birth to new life
 who are exhilarated by the sun rising
 who are romanced by the sun setting
 who dream to the floating clouds...

We who have a passing mark on the future of the world
 must have the same heart
 must have compassion for one another
 must have respect for one another
 must understand that though we have differences
 we all want the same things
 Nothing should divide us

SESSION 3

AGENDA

Devotion

Guest Speaker

Dialogue among group

Commitment to Greater

A.M.E. – Goals for next Conference Year

Closing Prayer

All Hearts Must Be One

Everyone has the same emotions
Everyone has the same feelings
Everyone has the same desires
No matter where we live
or what we believe in
all hearts must be one

We must make the world
a place where
love dominates our hearts
nature sets the standard for beauty
simplicity and honesty are
the essence of our relationships
kindness guides our actions
and everyone respects one another

SESSION 4**AGENDA**

Devotion

Overview of the events

Post-Assessment Test

Dialogue among group

Closing Prayer

APPENDIX D
TRANSCRIPT OF THE TAPE SESSION

May 2003 Interview with Mrs. Ethel Warner, one of the oldest living members of the Women Missionary Society. Its name now is The Edith Hodge Missionary Society, named for a member who supported the Missionary Society beyond the call.

The writer has known Mrs. Warner most of her life. Mrs. Warner and the writer's mother are friends and have been for years. Their mothers were friends. The writer remembers the family because, as a youngster growing up at Greater Allen A.M.E. Church, it was like one big family.

When asked about her feelings and concerns about the W.M.S., Mrs. Warner immediately went into the history that she knew well. Mrs. Warner carried me back to Richard Allen, the founder of the A.M.E.C. and his wife, Sarah Allen who started the Missionary Society. Sarah Allen started out by making sure the preacher's clothes were always clean and pressed when they were in town. She, along with other women, supplied this needed ministry for the preachers at that time, and from that it grew into one of the most viable components of the A.M.E.C.

The writer shared with Mrs. Warner that there wasn't much on the shelves in the library about A.M.E.C. Missionary work. Mrs. Warner supported that with the comment, "That is one of the problems with the A.M.E.C.; we're not recording enough of our history, especially when it concerns the Missionary Society." Mrs. Warner believes the A.M.E. W.M.S. is a good organization that has gone to sleep. Mrs. Warner would constantly ask the writer, "Do you remember when . . . ?"

Mrs. Warner says she doesn't know what the answer is for getting the church more involved in mission work. We need to be educated and it has to be done more than once a year. Mrs. Warner commented that there is too much politics in the church. Women come to the society for membership for a stepping stone to something else. They

come to lift themselves up and not Jesus. We are not doing the work God called us to do and until we make some changes, we will never grow.

Mrs. Warner said she prayed for change and is hopeful that one day it will happen. She would go in many directions and at times it was hard to keep her focused. She has been the church secretary for many years and when someone asks questions about Greater Allen A.M.E., they will send you to Ethel Warner. The writer was just as excited as Mrs. Warner was during the visit and the writer and Mrs. Warner agreed they will have more of these meetings.

APPENDIX E
MISSIONARY SOCIETY SURVEY

10-18	Knowledge of Missionary Society	Very Informed	Minimally Informed	Not at all
			1	
		1		
			1	
		1		
		1		
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			1	
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Age 10-18

[illegible]

Age 10-18

Importance of Missionary Work	Yes	No	Maybe
	1		
	1		
	1		
	1		
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	1		
			1
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Age 18-30

18-30	Knowledge of Missionary Society	Very Informed	Minimally Informed	Not At All
			1	
		1		
			1	
		1		
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			1	
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Age 18-30

[illegible]

Age 18-30

Importance of Missionary Work	Yes	No	Maybe
	1		
	1		
	1		
	1		
	1		
	1		
			1
	1		
	1		
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Age 30-50

30-50	Knowledge of Missionary Society	Very Informed	Minimally Informed	Not At All
			1	
		1		
			1	
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Age 30-50

Importance of Missionary Society	Very Important	Unimportant	No View on Subject
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	1		
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Age 30-50

Importance of Missionary Work	Yes	No	Maybe
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Over 50

Over 50	Knowledge of Missionary Society	Very Informed	Minimally Informed	Not at All
			1	
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Over 50

Importance of Missionary Work	Yes	No	Maybe
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Questions 10-18

10-18	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q8	Q9
	B	B	C	E	B	B	E	D	D
	B	C	A	D	A	B	A	B	B
	A	A	B	A	B	B	A	C	D
	B	B	B	E	D	E	A	C	E
	D	C	A	D	A	A	A	B	D
	A	B	B		A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	B	C	B	D	A	D	D
	C	D	A	E	B	E	A	A	E
	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	C	
	A	B			A		C		
	C	C	B	D	B	D	B	C	E
	B	B	A	D	A	E	B	D	D
	C	B	B	E	C	E	B	B	E
	B	B	B	C	B	C	B	D	D
	A	A	A						
	B	B	A	D	B	C	C	B	E
	B	B	A	A	D	B	B	C	E
	B	A							
	B	C	B	D	A	B	B		D
	B	E	A	E	B	E	B	B	B
	B	B	A	C	A	E	E	C	E
	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	D
	C	C	B	D	A	D	A	C	D
	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	E	E
	E	D	E	A	E	C	C	B	E
	B	B	B	E	A	A	B	C	E
	B	C	A	C	A	B	B	B	A
	B	B	C	C	B	B	B	B	B
	D	D	C	D	D	C	B	B	
	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C
	C	D	A	D	A	D	B	C	B
	C	C	A	E	A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D

Questions 18-30

[illegible]

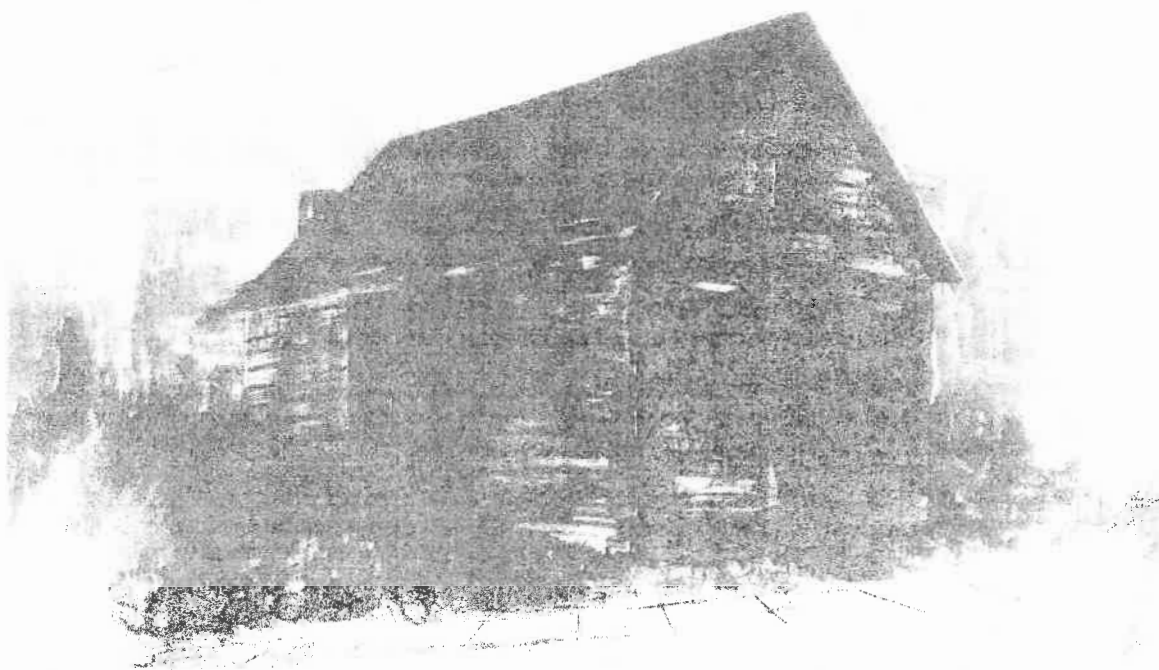
Questions 30-50

30-50	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9
	B	B	C	E	B	B	E	D	D
	B	C	A	D	A	B	A	B	B
	A	A	B	A	B	B	A	C	D
	B	B	B	E	D	E	A	C	E
	D	C	A	D	A	A	A	B	D
	A	B	B		A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	B	C	B	D	A	D	D
	C	D	A	E	B	E	A	A	E
	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	C	
	A	B			A		C		
	C	C	B	D	B	D	B	C	E
	B	B	A	D	A	E	B	D	D
	C	B	B	E	C	E	B	B	E
	B	B	B	C	B	C	B	D	D
	A	A	A						
	B	B	A	D	B	C	C	B	E
	B	B	A	A	D	B	B	C	E
	B	A							
	B	C	B	D	A	B	B		D
	B	E	A	E	B	E	B	B	B
	B	B	A	C	A	E	E	C	E
	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	D
	C	C	B	D	A	D	A	C	D
	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	E	E
	E	D	E	A	E	C	C	B	E
	B	B	B	E	A	A	B	C	E
	B	C	A	C	A	B	B	B	A
	B	B	C	C	B	B	B	B	B
	D	D	C	D	D	C	B	B	
	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C
	C	D	A	D	A	D	B	C	B
	C	C	A	E	A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D

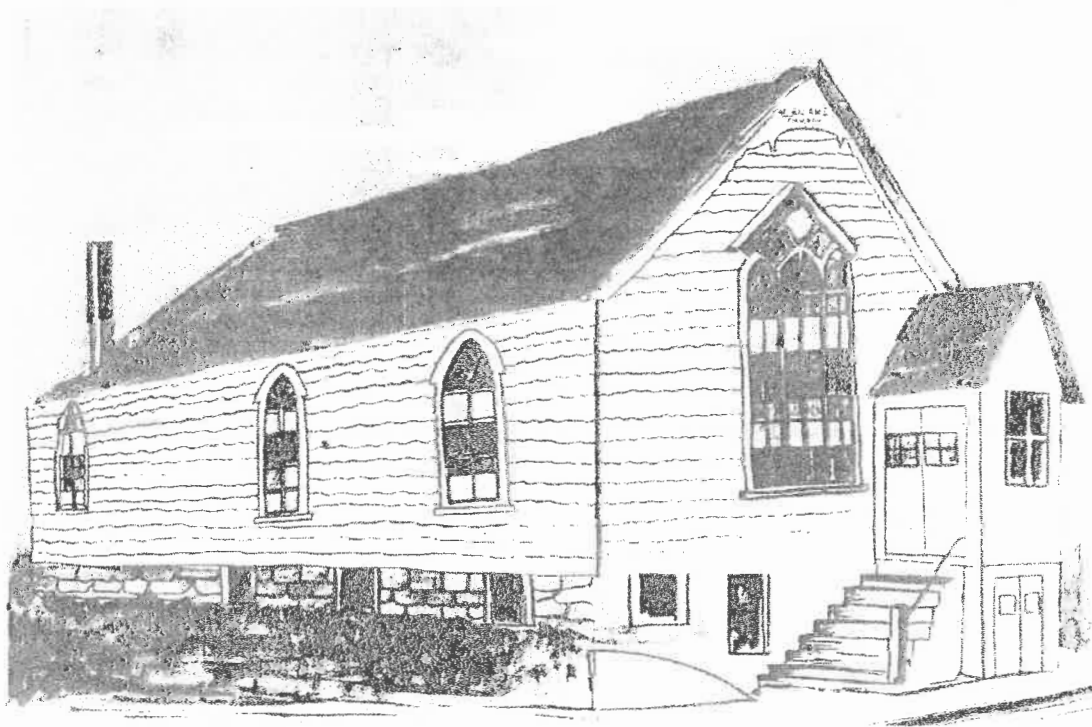
Questions Over 50

Over 50	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9
	B	B	C	E	B	B	E	D	D
	B	C	A	D	A	B	A	B	B
	A	A	B	A	B	B	A	C	D
	B	B	B	E	D	E	A	C	E
	D	C	A	D	A	A	A	B	D
	A	B	B		A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	B	C	B	D	A	D	D
	C	D	A	E	B	E	A	A	E
	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	C	
	A	B			A		C		
	C	C	B	D	B	D	B	C	E
	B	B	A	D	A	E	B	D	D
	C	B	B	E	C	E	B	B	E
	B	B	B	C	B	C	B	D	D
	A	A	A						
	B	B	A	D	B	C	C	B	E
	B	B	A	A	D	B	B	C	E
	B	A							
	B	C	B	D	A	B	B		D
	B	E	A	E	B	E	B	B	B
	B	B	A	C	A	E	E	C	E
	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	D
	C	C	B	D	A	D	A	C	D
	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	E	E
	E	D	E	A	E	C	C	B	E
	B	B	B	E	A	A	B	C	E
	B	C	A	C	A	B	B	B	A
	B	B	C	C	B	B	B	B	B
	D	D	C	D	D	C	B	B	
	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C
	C	D	A	D	A	D	B	C	B
	C	C	A	E	A	E	B	A	E
	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D
	A	A	C	B	A	B	E	C	D

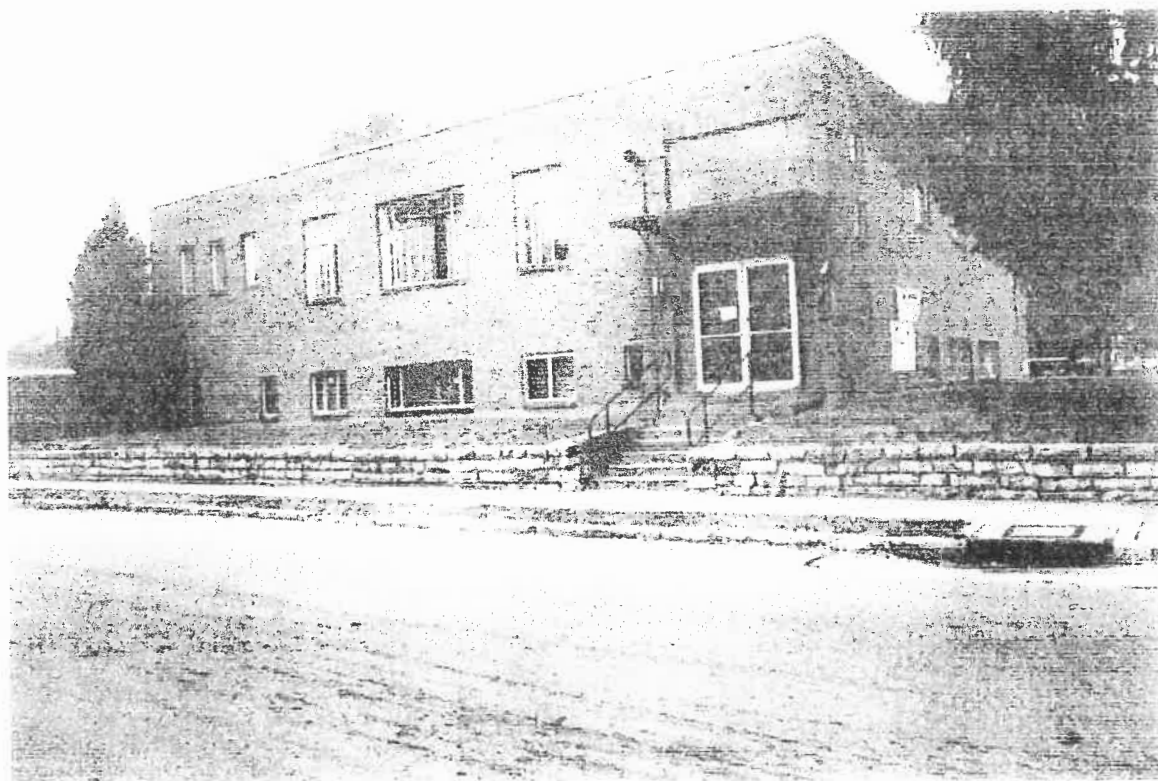
APPENDIX F
PICTURES OF CONTEXT



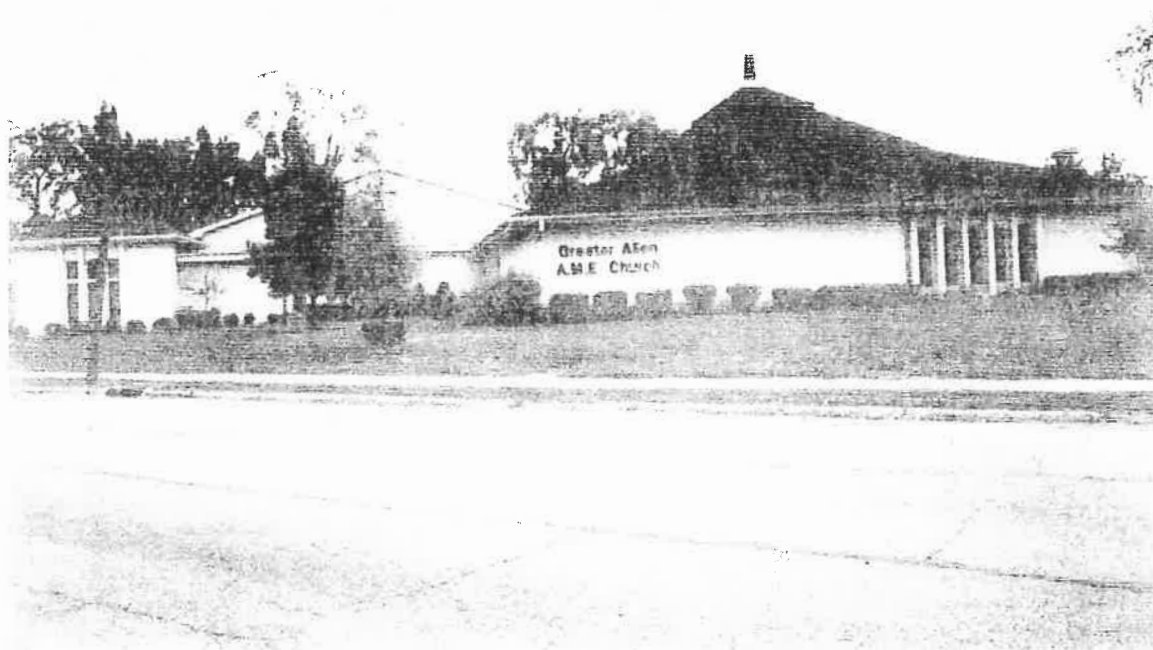
1892 - 1907



1907 - 1951



1953 - 1979



1979 - Present

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